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299 KING LEAR, The History of, a Tragedy, as it is now acted at the King's Theatres, *Revived, with Alterations*, by N. Tate, 12mo, *half morocco, very neat*, 7s 6d 1756

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THE

HISTORY

OF

King *LEAR*,

A

TRAGEDY:

As it is now acted at the King's Theatres.

Revived, with Alterations, by N. TATE.

LONDON:

Printed for C. HITCH and L. HAWES, J. BRINDLEY, J. HODGES, M. and T. LONGMAN, A. and C. CORBETT, J. and T. KING, W. REEVE, J. COOPER, and F. and J. NOBLE. M.DCC.LVI.

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May, 1873

TO

My Esteem'd FRIEND

THOMAS BOTELER, *Esq;*

YOU have a natural Right to this Piece, since by your Advice I attempted the Revival of it with Alterations. Nothing but the Power of your Persuasions, and my Zeal for all the Remains of *Shakespear*, cou'd have wrought me to so bold an Undertaking. I found that the New-modelling of this Story wou'd force me sometimes on the difficult Task of making the chiefest Persons speak something like their Characters, on Matter whereof I had no Ground in my Author. *Lear*'s real and *Edgar*'s pretended Madness have so much of *extravagant Nature* (I know not how to express it) as could never have started, but from our *Shakespear*'s Creating Fancy. The Images and Languages are so odd and surprising, and yet so agreeable and proper, that whilst we grant that none but *Shakespear* could have form'd such Conceptions; yet we are satisfied that they were the only Things in the World that ought to be said on these Occasions. I found the Whole to answer your Account of it, a Heap of Jewels unstrung, and unpolish'd; yet so dazzling in their Disorder, that I soon perceiv'd I had seiz'd a Treasure. 'Twas my good Fortune to light on one Expedient to rectify what was wanting in the Regularity and Probability of the Tale, which was to run through the Whole, as *Love* betwixt *Edgar* and *Cordelia*; that never chang'd Word with each other in the Original. This renders *Cordelia*'s Indifference, and her Father's Passion in the first Scene, probable. It likewise gives Countenance to *Edgar*'s Disguise, making that a generous Design that

was before a poor Shift to save his life. The Distress of the Story is evidently heightened by it; and it particularly gave Occasion of a new Scene or two, of more Success (perhaps) than Merit. This Method necessarily threw me on making the Tale conclude in a Success to the innocent distrest Persons: Otherwise I must have incumbered the Stage with dead Bodies, which Conduct makes many Tragedies conclude with unseasonable Jests. Yet was I wrack'd with no small Fears for so bold a Change, 'till I found it well receiv'd by my Audience; and if this will not satisfy the Reader, I can produce an Authority that questionless will.

Mr. *Dryd.* Pref. to the *Spanish Friar.*

Neither is it of so Trivial an Undertaking to make a Tragedy end happily, for 'tis more difficult to save than 'tis to kill: the Dagger and the Cup of Poison are always in Readiness; but to bring the Action to the last Extremity, and then by probable Means to recover All, will require the Art and Judgment of a Writer, and cost him many a Pang in the Performance.

I have one Thing more to apologize for, which is, that I have us'd less Quaintness of Expression even in the newest Parts of this Play. I confess, it was Design in me, partly to comply with my Author's Style, to make the Scenes of a Piece, and partly to give it some Resemblance of the Time and Persons here represented. This, Sir, I submit wholly to you, who are both a Judge and Master of Style. Nature had exempted you before you went Abroad from the morose Saturnine Humour of our Country, and you brought Home the Refinedness of Travel without the Affectation. Many Faults I see in the following Pages, and question not but you will discover more; yet I will presume so far on your Friendship, as to make the Whole a Present to you, and subscribe myself,

Your obliged Friend

and humble Servant,

N. TATE.

PROLOGUE.

SINCE by Miſtakes your beſt Delights are made,
(For e'en your Wives can pleaſe in Maſquerade)
'Twere worth our while t'ave drawn you in this Day
By a new Name to our old honeſt Play;
But he that did this Evening's Treat prepare
Bluntly reſolv'd before-hand to declare
Your Entertainment ſhould be moſt old Fare.
Yet hopes, ſince in rich Shakeſpear's *Soil it grew,*
'Twill reliſh yet, with thoſe whoſe Taſtes are true,
And his Ambition is to pleaſe a Few.
If then this Heap of Flow'rs ſhall chance to wear
Freſh Beauty in the Order they now bear,
Even this Shakeſpear's *Praiſe; each Ruſtick knows*
'Mongſt plenteous Flow'rs a Garland to compoſe,
Which ſtrung by this coarſe Hand may fairer ſhow,
But 'twas a Power Divine firſt made 'em grow.
Why ſhou'd theſe Scenes lie hid, in which we find
What may at once divert and teach the Mind;
Morals were always proper for the Stage,
But are ev'n neceſſary in this Age;
Poets muſt take the Church's teaching Trade,
Since Prieſts their Province of Intrigue invade;
But we the worſt of this Exchange have got,
In vain our Poets preach, whilſt Churchmen plot.

The PERSONS.

KING *Lear*,	Mr. *Garrick.*
Gloſter,	Mr. *Berry.*
Kent,	Mr. *Branſby.*
Edgar,	Mr. *Havard.*
Baſtard,	Mr. *Palmer.*
Cornwall,	Mr. *Blakes.*
Albany,	Mr. *Uſher.*
Burgundy,	Mr. *Marr.*
Gentleman Uſher,	Mr. *Vernon.*
Goneril,	Mrs. *Bennet.*
Regan,	Miſs *Haughton.*
Cordelia.	Mrs. *Cibber.*

Guards, Officers, Meſſengers, Attendants.

THE

THE HISTORY OF King *LEAR.*

ACT I.

Enter Baſtard *ſolus.*

Baſt. THOU Nature art my Goddeſs; to thy Law
My Services are bound; Why am I then
Depriv'd of a Son's Right, becauſe I came not
In the dull Road that Cuſtom has preſcrib'd?
Why Baſtard, wherefore Baſe, when I can boaſt
A Mind as gen'rous, and a Shape as true
As honeſt Madam's Iſſue? Why are we
Held Baſe, who in the luſty Stealth of Nature
Take fiercer Qualities than what compound
The ſcanted Births of the ſtale Marriage-bed.

Well

Well then, legitimate *Edgar*, to thy Right
Of Law I will oppose a Bastard's Cunning.
Our Father's Love is to the Bastard *Edmund*
As to legitimate *Edgar*; with Success
I've practis'd yet on both their easy Natures:
Here comes the old Man chaf'd with th' Information
Which last I forg'd against my Brother *Edgar*;
A Tale so plausible, so boldly utterr'd,
And heighten'd by such lucky Accident,
That now the slightest Circumstance confirms him,
And base-born *Edmund* spight of Law inherits.

Enter Kent and Gloster.

Glost. Nay, good my Lord, your Charity
O'ershoots itself, to plead in his Behalf;
You are yourself a Father, and may feel
The Sting of Disobedience from a Son.
First-born and best-belov'd: O Villain *Edgar!*

Kent. Be not too rash; all may be Forgery,
And Time yet clear the Duty of your Son.

Glost. Plead with the Seas, and reason down the Winds,
Yet shalt thou ne'er convince me: I have seen
His foul Designs through all a Father's Fondness:
But be this Light and thou my Witnesses,
That I discard him here from my Possessions,
Divorce him from my Heart, my Blood, and Name.

Bast. It works as I cou'd wish; I'll shew myself.

Glost. Ha! *Edmund!* welcome Boy. O *Kent*, see here
Inverted Nature, *Gloster*'s Shame and Glory:
This By-born, the wild Sally of my Youth,
Pursues me with all filial Offices;
Whilst *Edgar*, beg'd of Heaven, and born in Honour,
Draws Plagues on my white Head, that urge me still
To curse in Age the Pleasure of my Youth
Nay, weep not, *Edmund*, for thy Brother's Crimes.
O generous Boy! thou shar'st but half his Blood,
Yet lov'st beyond the Kindness of a Brother:
But I'll reward thy Virtue. Follow me.
My Lord, you wait the King, who comes resolv'd
To quit the Toils of Empire, and divide
His Realms amongst his Daughters. Heaven succeed it;
But much I fear the Change.

Kent.

Kent. I grieve to ſee him
With ſuch wild Starts of Paſſion hourly ſeiz'd,
As render Majeſty between itſelf.
Gloſt. Alas! 'tis the Infirmity of his Age:
Yet has his Temper ever been unfixt,
Chol'rick and ſudden; hark, they approach.
[*Exeunt* Gloſt. *and* Baſt.
Flouriſh. Enter Lear, Cornwall, Albany, Burgundy, Edgar, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, Edgar *ſpeaking to* Cordelia *at Entrance.*
Edgar. Cordelia, Royal Fair, turn yet once more,
And e'er ſucceſsful *Burgundy* receive
The Treaſure of thy Beauties from the King,
E'er happy *Burgundy* for ever fold Thee,
Caſt back one pitying Look on wretched *Edgar.*
Cord. Alas! what wou'd the wretched *Edgar* with
The more unfortunate *Cordelia*,
Who in Obedience to a Father's Will
Flies from her *Edgar*'s Arms to *Burgundy*'s?
Lear. Attend my Lords of *Albany* and *Cornwall*,
With Princely *Burgundy*.
Alb. We do, my Liege.
Lear. Give me this Map——Know, Lords, we have divided
In Three our Kingdom, having now reſolv'd
To diſengage from our long Toil of State,
Conferring all upon your younger Years;
You *Burgundy*, *Cornwall* and *Albany*,
Long in our Court have made your amorous Sojourn,
And now are to be anſwer'd.—Tell me, my Daughters,
Which of you loves us moſt, that we may place
Our largeſt Bounty with our largeſt Merit.
Goneril, our Eldeſt-born, ſpeak firſt.
Gon. Sir, I do love you more than Words can utter,
Beyond what can be valu'd Rich, or Rare;
Nor Liberty, nor Sight, Health, Fame, or Beauty,
Are half ſo dear; my Life for you were vile;
As much as Child can love the beſt of Fathers.
Lear. Of all theſe Bounds, e'en from this Line to this,
With ſhady Foreſts, and wide ſkirted Meads,
We make thee Lady; to thine and *Albany*'s Iſſue
Be this perpetual.—What ſays our ſecond Daughter?

Reg.

Reg. My Sister, Sir, in Part, expreſt my Love ;
For ſuch as hers, is mine, though more extended :
Senſe has no other Joy that I can reliſh,
I have may All in my dear Liege's Love.

Lear. Therefore to thee and thine Hereditary
Remain this ample Third of our fair Kingdom.

Cord. Now comes my Trial, how am I diſtreſt ! [*Aſide.*
That muſt with cold Speech tempt the Chol'rick King
Rather to leave me Dowerleſs, than condemn me
To loath'd Embraces.

Lear. Speak now our laſt, not leaſt in our dear Love,
So ends my Taſk of State——*Cordelia*, ſpeak.
What canſt thou ſay to win a richer Third
Than what thy Sisters gain'd ?

Cord. Now muſt my Love in Words, fall ſhort of theirs,
As much as it exceeds in Truth——Nothing, my Lord.

Lear. Nothing can come of Nothing, ſpeak again.

Cord. Unhappy am I that I cannot diſſemble :
Sir, as I ought, I love your Majeſty,
No more, nor leſs.

Lear. Take heed, *Cordelia* ;
Thy Fortunes are at ſtake, think better on't,
And mend thy Speech a little.

Cord. O my Liege !
You gave me Being, bred me, dearly love me,
And I return my Duty as I ought ;
Obey you, love you, and moſt honour you ;
Why have my Sisters Huſbands, if they love you All ;
Haply when I ſhall wed, the Lord whoſe Hand
Shall take my Plight, will carry half my Love ;
For I ſhall never marry like my Sisters,
To love my Father all.

Lear. And goes thy Heart with this ?
'Tis ſaid that I am Chol'rick. Judge me Gods,
Is there not Cauſe ? Now, Minion, I perceive
The Truth of what has been ſuggeſted to us ;
Thy Fondneſs for the Rebel Son of *Gloſter*,
Falſe to his Father, as thou art to my Hopes :
And oh ! take heed, raſh Girl, leſt we comply
With thy fond Wiſhes, which thou wilt too late
Repent ; for know our Nature cannot brook
A Child ſo young, and ſo ungentile.

Cord.

Cord. So young my Lord, and true.
Lear. Thy Truth then be thy Dow'r;
For by the ſacred Sun, and ſolemn Night,
I here diſclaim all my paternal Care,
And from this Minute hold thee as a Stranger
Both to my Blood and Favour.
Kent. This is Frenzy.
Conſider, good my Liege——
Lear. Peace, *Kent*;
Come not between a Dragon and his Rage;
I lov'd her moſt, and in her tender Truſt
Deſign'd to have beſtow'd my Age at Eaſe:
So be my Grave my Peace, as here I give
My Heart from her, and with it all my Wealth.
My Lords of *Cornwall* and of *Albany*,
I do inveſt you jointly with full Right
In this fair Third, *Cordelia*'s forfeit Dow'r.
Mark me my Lords, obſerve our laſt Reſolve;
Our Self, attended with an hundred Knights,
Will make Abode with you in monthly Courſe;
The Name alone of King remain with me,
Your's be th' Execution and Revenues.
This is our final Will; and to confirm it,
This Coronet part between you.
Kent. Royal *Lear*,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my King,
Lov'd as my Father, as my Maſter follow'd,
And as my Patron, thought on in my Prayers——
Lear. Away, the Bow is bent, make from the Shaft.
Kent. No, let it fall, and drench within my Heart;
Be *Kent* unmannerly when *Lear* is mad;
Thy youngeſt Daughter——
Lear. On thy Life no more.
Kent. What wilt thou do, old Man?
Lear. Out of my Sight.
Kent. See better firſt.
Lear. Now by the Gods——
Kent. Now by the Gods, raſh King, thou ſwear'ſt in vain.
Lear. Ha, Traitor!
Kent. Do, kill thy Phyſician, *Lear*;
Strike thro' my Throat, yet with my lateſt Breath

I'll

I'll thunder in thine Ear my juſt Complaint,
And tell Thee to thy Face that thou doſt ill.
Lear. Hear me, raſh Man; on thy Allegiance hear me.
Since thou haſt ſtriven to make Us break our Vow,
And preſt between our Sentence and our Pow'r,
Which nor our Nature, nor our Place can bear,
We baniſh thee for ever from our Sight
And Kingdom: If when three Days are expired,
Thy hated Trunk be found in our Dominions,
That Moment is thy Death. Away.
Kent. Why fare thee well, King; ſince thou art reſolv'd,
I take thee at thy Word, and will not ſtay
To ſee thy Fall: The Gods protect the Maid
That truly thinks, and has moſt juſtly ſaid.
Thus to new Climates my old Truth I bear;
Friendſhip lives hence, and Baniſhment is here. [*Exit.*
Lear. Now, *Burgundy*, you ſee her Price is fallen;
Yet if the Fondneſs of your Paſſion ſtill
Affects her as ſhe ſtands, Dow'rleſs, and loſt
In our Eſteem, ſhe's your's; take her, or leave her.
Burgundy. Pardon me, Royal *Lear*, I but demand
The Dow'r yourſelf propos'd, and here I take
Cordelia by the Hand, Ducheſs of *Burgundy*.
Lear. Then leave her, Sir; for by a Father's Rage
I tell you all her Wealth. Away.
Burg. Then, Sir, be pleas'd to charge the Breach
Of our Alliance on your own Will,
Not my Inconſtancy.
[*Exeunt.* *Manent* Edgar *and* Cordelia.
Edg. Has Heav'n then weigh'd the Merit of my Love,
Or is't the Raving of my ſickly Thought?
Cou'd *Burgundy* forego ſo rich a Prize,
And leave her to deſpairing *Edgar*'s Arms?
Have I thy Hand, *Cordelia?* Do I claſp it?
The Hand that was this Minute to have join'd
My hated Rival's? Do I kneel before thee,
And offer at thy Feet my panting Heart?
Smile, Princeſs, and convince me; for as yet
I doubt, and dare not truſt the dazzling Joy.
Cord. Some Comfort yet, that 'twas no vicious Blot
That has depriv'd me of a Father's Grace,

But

But merely Want of that which makes me rich
In wanting it; a ſmooth profeſſing Tongue:
O Siſters! I am loath to call your Fault
As it deſerves; but uſe our Father well,
And wrong'd *Cordelia* never ſhall repine.

Edg. O heav'nly Maid! that art thyſelf thy Dow'r,
Richer in Virtue than the Stars in Light;
If *Edgar*'s humble Fortunes may be grac'd
With thy Acceptance, at thy Feet he lays 'em.
Ha, my *Cordelia!* doſt thou turn away?
What have I done t' offend thee?

Cord. Talk't of Love.

Edg. Then I've offended oft; *Cordelia* too
Has oft permitted me ſo to offend.

Cord. When, *Edgar*, I permitted your Addreſſes,
I was the darling Daughter of a King,
Nor can I now forget my Royal Birth,
And live dependant on my Lover's Fortune;
I cannot to ſo low a Fate ſubmit;
And therefore ſtudy to forget your Paſſion,
And trouble me upon this Theme no more.

Edg. Thus Majeſty takes moſt State in Diſtreſs!
How are we toſt on Fortune's fickle Flood!
The Wave that with ſurpriſing Kindneſs brought
The dear Wreck to my Arms, has ſnatch't it back,
And left me mourning on the barren Shore.

Cord. This Baſeneſs of th' ignoble *Burgundy*, [*Aſide.*
Draws juſt Suſpicion on the Race of Men;
His Love was Int'reſt, ſo may *Edgar*'s be,
And he but with more Compliment diſſemble;
If ſo, I ſhall oblige him by denying:
But if his Love be fixt, ſuch conſtant Flame
As warms our Breaſts, if ſuch I find his Paſſion,
My Heart as grateful to his Truth ſhall be,
And could *Cordelia* prove as kind as He. [*Exit.*

Enter Baſtard *haſtily.*

Baſt. Brother, I've found you in a lucky Minute;
Fly and be ſafe, ſome Villain has incens'd
Our Father againſt your Life.

Edg. Diſtreſt *Cordelia!* but ho! more cruel.

Baſt. Hear me, Sir, your Life, your Life's in danger.

Edg. A Reſolve ſo ſudden,
And of ſuch black Importance!
Baſt. 'Twas not ſudden,
Some Villain has of long time laid a Train.
Edg. And yet perhaps 'twas but pretended Coldneſs,
To try how far my Paſſion would purſue.
Baſt. He hears me not! 'wake, 'wake, Sir.
Edg. Say ye, Brother?——
No Tears, good *Edmund*, if th'haſt brought me Tidings
To ſtrike me dead, for Charity delay not;
That Preſent will befit ſo kind a Hand.
Baſt. Your Danger, Sir, comes on ſo faſt,
That I want Time t'inform you; but retire
Whilſt I take care to turn the preſſing Stream.
O Gods! For Heaven's Sake, Sir.
Edg. Pardon me, Sir, a ſerious Thought
Had ſeiz'd me; but I think you talk'd of Danger,
And wiſh'd me to retire: Muſt all our Vows
End thus!—Friend, I obey you.—O *Cordelia.* [*Exit.*
Baſt. Ha! ha! fond Man, ſuch credulous Honeſty
Leſſens the Glory of my Artifice;
His Nature is ſo far from doing Wrongs,
That he ſuſpects none: If this Letter ſpeed,
And paſs for *Edgar*'s, as himſelf would own
The Counterfeit, but for the foul Contents,
Then my Deſigns are perfect.—Here comes *Gloſter.*

Enter Gloſter.

Gloſt. Stay, *Edmund*, turn; what Paper were you [reading?
Baſt. A Trifle, Sir.
Gloſt. What needed then that terrible Diſpatch of it
Into your Pocket? Come, produce it, Sir.
Baſt. A Letter from my Brother, Sir; I had
Juſt broke the Seal, but knew not the Contents;
Yet, fearing they might prove to blame,
Endeavour'd to conceal it from your Sight.
Gloſt. 'Tis *Edgar*'s Character. [*Reads.*
This Policy of Fathers is intolerable, that keeps our Fortunes from us 'till Age will not ſuffer us to enjoy them; I am weary of the Tyranny: Come to me, that of this I may ſpeak more. If our Father would ſleep 'till I waked him, you ſhould enjoy half his Poſſeſſions, and live belov'd of your Brother Edgar.

Sleep

Sleep till I wake'd him! you should enjoy
Half his Possessions!—*Edgar* to write this
'Gainst his indulgent Father! Death and Hell!
Fly, *Edmund*, seek him out; wind me into him,
That I may bite the Traytor's Heart, and fold
His bleeding Entrails on my vengeful Arm.

Bast. Perhaps 'twas writ, my Lord, to prove my Virtue.

Glost. These late Eclipses of the Sun and Moon
Can bode no less; Love cools, and Friendship fails,
In Cities Mutiny, in Countries Discord,
The Bond of Nature crackt 'twixt Son and Father:
Find out the Villain; do it carefully,
And it shall lose thee Nothing. [*Exit.*

Bast. So now my Project's firm; but to make sure
I'll throw in one Proof more, and that a bold one;
I'll place old *Glester* where he shall o'er-hear us
Confer of this Design; whilst, to his thinking,
Deluded *Edgar* shall accuse himself.
Be Honesty my Int'rest, and I can
Be honest too: And what Saint so Divine,
That will successful Villainy decline? [*Exit.*

Enter Kent *disguis'd.*

Kent. Now banish'd *Kent*, if thou canst pay thy Duty
In this Disguise, where thou dost stand condemn'd,
Thy Master *Lear* shall find thee full of Labours.

Enter Lear *attended.*

Lear. In there, and tell our Daughter we are here.
Now, What art thou?

Kent. A Man, Sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess, or would'st with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem, to serve him truly that puts me in Trust, to love him that's honest, to converse with him that's wise and speaks little, to fight when I can't chuse, and to eat no Fish.

Lear. I say, what art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted Fellow, and as poor as the King.

Lear. Then art thou poor indeed.—What canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest Counsel, mar a curious Tale in the telling, deliver a plain Message bluntly; that which

ordinary Men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the beſt of me is Diligence.

Lear. Follow me; thou ſhalt ſerve me.

Enter one of Goneril's *Gentlemen.*

Now, Sir?

Gent. Sir———[*Exit.* Kent *runs after him.*

Lear. What ſays the Fellow? Call me the Clodpole back.

Att. My Lord, I know not, but methinks your Highneſs is entertain'd with ſlender Ceremony.

Servant. He ſays, my Lord, your Daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the Slave back when I called him?

Serv. My Lord, he anſwered me i'th' ſurlieſt Manner, that he would not.

Re-enter Gentleman *brought by* Kent.

Lear. I hope our Daughter did not ſo inſtruct him. Now, who am I, Sir?

Gent. My Lady's Father.

Lear. My Lord's Knave.———*Strikes him.*

Goneril *at the Entrance.*

Gon. By Day and Night; this is inſufferable, I will not bear it.

Lear. Now Daughter, why that Frontlet on? Speak, does that Frown become our Preſence?

Gent. I'll not be ſtruck, my Lord.

Kent. Nor tript neither, thou vile Civet-box. [*Strikes up his Heels.*

Gon. Sir, this licentious Inſolence of your Servants Is moſt unſeemly: hourly they break out In Quarrels bred; by making this known to you, I thought to have had Redreſs, but find too late That you protect and countenance their Outrage; And therefore, Sir, I take this Freedom, which Neceſſity makes diſcreet.

Lear. Are you our Daughter?

Gon. Come, Sir, let me intreat you to make uſe Of your Diſcretion, and put off betimes This Diſpoſition that of late transforms you From what you rightly are.

Lear. Does any here know me? Why, this is not *Lear.*

Does

Does *Lear* walk thus? Speak thus? Where are his Eyes?
Who is it that can tell me who I am?
Gon. Come, Sir, this Admiration's much o'th' Savour
Of other your new Humours; I beſeech you
To underſtand my Purpoſes aright;
As you are old, you ſhould be ſtaid and wiſe:
Here do you keep an hundred Knights and Squires,
Men ſo debauch'd and bold, that this our Palace
Shews like a riotous Inn, a Tavern, Brothel;
Be then adviſ'd by her that elſe will take
That which ſhe begs, to leſſen your Attendance,
Take half away, and ſee that the Remainder
Be ſuch as may befit your Age, and know
Themſelves and You.
Lear. Darkneſs and Devils!
Saddle my Horſes, call my Train together;
Degenerate Viper, I'll not ſtay with Thee!
I yet have left a Daughter——Serpent, Monſter!
Leſſen my Train, and call 'em riotous!
All Men approv'd, of choice and rareſt Parts
That each Particular of Duty know.——
How ſmall, *Cordelia*, was thy Fault? O *Lear*,
Beat at this Gate that let thy Folly in,
And thy dear Judgment out; Go, go, my People.
Going off, meets Albany *entring.*
Ingrateful Duke, was this your Will?
Alb. What, Sir?
Lear. Death! fifty of my Followers at a Clap!
Alb. The Matter, Madam?
Gon. Never afflict yourſelf to know the Cauſe,
But give his Dotage Way.
Lear. Blaſts upon thee,
Th' untented Woundings of a Father's Curſe
Pierce every Senſe about thee; old fond Eyes,
Lament this Cauſe again, I'll pluck ye out,
And caſt ye with the Waters that ye loſe
To temper Clay.—— No, *Gorgon*, thou ſhalt find
That I'll reſume the Shape which thou doſt think
I have caſt off for ever.
Gon. Mark ye that.
Lear. Hear Nature!

Dear Goddeſs hear; and if thou doſt intend
To make that Creature fruitful, change thy Purpoſe;
Pronounce upon her Womb the barren Curſe,
That from her blaſted Body never ſpring
A Babe to honour her;—But if ſhe muſt bring forth,
Defeat her Joy with ſome diſtorted Birth,
Or monſtrous Form, the Prodigy o' th' Time;
And ſo perverſe of Spirit, that it may live
Her Torment as 'twas born, to fret her Cheeks
With conſtant Tears, and wrinkle her young Brow.
Turn all her Mother's Pains to Shame and Scorn,
That ſhe may curſe her Crime too late, and feel
How ſharper than a Serpent's Tooth it is
To have a thankleſs Child: Away, away. [*Exit cum ſuis.*

Gon. Preſuming thus upon his numerous Train,
He thinks to play the Tyrant here, and hold
Our Lives at Will.

Alb. Well, you may bear too far. [*Exit.*

End of the Firſt Act.

ACT II.

SCENE *Gloſter*'s Houſe.

Enter Baſtard.

Baſt. THE Duke comes here to Night, I'll take the Advantage
Of his Arrival to complete my Project:
Brother, a Word, come forth; 'tis I your Friend, [*Enter* Edgar.
My Father watches for you, fly this Place.
Intelligence is giv'n where you're hid; [
Take the Advantage of the Night; bethink ye,

Have

Have you not ſpoke againſt the Duke of *Cornwal*
Something might ſhew you a Favourer of
Duke *Albany*'s Party?
Edg. Nothing; why ask you?
Baſt. Becauſe he's coming here To-night in haſte,
And *Regan* with him—Hark! the Guards; away.
Edg. Let 'em come on, I'll ſtay and clear myſelf.
Baſt. Your Innocence at Leiſure may be heard,
But *Gloſter*'s ſtorming Rage as yet is deaf,
And you may periſh e'er allow'd the Hearing. [*Ex.* Edgar.
Gloſter comes yonder: Now to my feign'd Scuffle—
Yield, come before my Father! Lights here, Lights!
Some Blood drawn on me wou'd beget Opinion [*Stabs his Arms.*
Of our more fierce Encounter.—I have ſeen
Drunkards do more than this in Sport.

Enter Gloſter *and Servants.*

Gloſter. Now, *Edmund*, where's the Traitor?
Baſt. That Name, Sir,
Strikes Horror through me; but my Brother, Sir,
Stood here i'th' dark.
Gloſter. Thou bleed'ſt! purſue the Villain,
And bring him Piece-meal to me.
Baſt. Sir, he's fled.
Gloſt. Let him fly far, this Kingdom ſhall not hide him:
The noble Duke my Patron comes To-night;
By his Authority I will proclaim
Rewards for him that brings him to the Stage,
And Death for the Concealer.
Then of my Lands, loyal and natural Boy,
I'll work the Means to make thee capable. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Kent (*diſguiſed ſtill*) *and* Goneril's *Gentleman, ſeverally.*

Gent. Good morrow, Friend, belong'ſt thou to this
Kent. Aſk them will anſwer thee. [Houſe?
Gent. Where may we ſet our Horſes?
Kent. I'th' Mire.
Gent. I am in haſte, prithee an' thou lov'ſt me, tell me.
Kent. I love thee not.
Gent. Why then I care not for thee.
Kent. An' I had thee in *Lipſbury* Pinfold, I'd make thee care for me.

Gent,

Gent. What doſt thou mean ? I know thee not.

Kent. But, Minion, I know thee.

Gent. What doſt thou know me for ?

Kent. For a baſe, proud, beggarly, white-liver'd, glaſs-glaring, ſuper-ſerviceable, finical Rogue ; one that wou'd be a Pimp in Way of good Service, and art nothing but a Compoſition of Knave, Beggar, Coward, Pandar——

Gent. What a monſtrous Fellow art thou to rail at One that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee.

Kent. Impudent Slave ! not know me, who but two Days ſince tript up thy Heels before the King : Draw, Miſcreant, or I'll make the Moon ſhine through thee.

Gent. What means the Fellow ? Why, prithee, prithee ; I tell thee I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. I know your Rogueſhip's Office ; you come with Letters againſt the King, taking my young Lady *Vanity*'s Part againſt her Royal Father : Draw, Raſcal.

Gent. Murder, Murder, help. [*Exit* Kent *after him.*

Flouriſh. *Enter Duke of* Cornwal, Regan, *attended* ; Gloſter, Baſtard.

Gloſt. All Welcome to your Graces, you do me Honour.

Duke. *Gloſter*, We've heard with Sorrow that your Life Has been attempted by your impious Son ; But *Edmund* here has paid you ſtricteſt Duty.

Gloſt. He did betray his Practice, and receiv'd The Hurt you ſee, ſtriving to apprehend him.

Duke. Is he purſued ?

Gloſt. He is, my Lord.

Regan. Uſe our Authority to apprehend The Traitor, and do Juſtice on his Head ; For you, *Edmund*, that have ſo ſignaliz'd Your Virtue, you from henceforth ſhall be ours ; Natures of ſuch firm Truſt we much ſhall need. A charming Youth, and worth my farther Thought. [*Aſide.*

Duke. Lay Comforts, noble *Gloſter*, to your Breaſt, As we to ours. This Night be ſpent in Revels. We chuſe you, *Gloſter*, for our Hoſt To-night, A troubleſome Expreſſion of our Love. On, to the Sports before us.——Who are theſe ?

Enter

Enter the Gentleman, *purſued by* Kent.

Gloſt. Now, what's the Matter?

Duke. Keep Peace upon your Lives; he dies that ſtrikes, Whence, and what are ye?

Art. Sir, they are Meſſengers, the one from your Siſter, the other from the King.

Duke. Your Difference, ſpeak.

Gent. I'm ſcarce in Breath, my Lord.

Kent. No Marvel, you have ſo beſtir'd your Valour. Nature diſclaims the Daſtard; a Taylor made him.

Duke. Speak yet, how grew your Quarrel?

Gent. Sir, this old Ruffian here, whoſe Life I ſpared, In Pity to his Beard———

Kent. Thou Eſſence Bottle! In Pity to my Beard———Your Leave, my Lord, And I will tread the Muſk-cat into Mortar.

Duke. Know'ſt thou our Preſence?

Kent. Yes, Sir, but Anger has a Privilege.

Duke. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That ſuch a Slave as this ſhould wear a Sword, And have no Courage; Office, and no Honeſty: Not Froſt and Fire hold more Antipathy Than I and ſuch a Knave.

Gloſt. Why doſt thou call him Knave?

Kent. His Countenance likes me not.

Duke. No more perhaps does mine, nor his, or hers.

Kent. Plain Dealing is my Trade; and to be plain, Sir, I have ſeen better Faces in my Time, Than ſtand on any Shoulders now before me.

Reg. This is ſome Fellow, that having once been prais'd For Bluntneſs, ſince affects a ſaucy Rudeneſs; But I have known one of theſe ſurly Knaves, That in his Plainneſs harbour'd more Deſign Than twenty cringing complimenting Minions.

Duke. What's the Offence you gave him?

Gent. Never any, Sir; It pleas'd the King, his Maſter, lately To ſtrike me on a ſlender Miſconſtruction, Whil'ſt watching his Advantage, this old Lurcher Tript me behind, for which the King extoll'd him; And, fluſht with the Honour of this bold Exploit, Drew on me here again.

Duke.

Duke. Bring forth the Stocks, we'll teach you.
Kent Sir, I'm too old to learn;
Call not the Stocks for me, I serve the King;
On whose Employment I was sent to you:
You'll shew too small Respect, and too bold Malice
Against the Person of my Royal Master,
Stocking his Messenger.
Duke. Bring forth the Stocks, as I have Life and Ho-
There shall he sit till Noon. [nour,
Reg. Till Noon, my Lord! Till Night, and all Night too.
Kent. Why Madam, If I were your Father's Dog
You would not use me so.
Reg. Sir, being his Knave, I will.
Glost. Let me beseech your Graces to forbear him;
His Fault is much, and the Good King his Master
Will check him for't, but needs must take it ill
To be thus slighted in his Messenger.
Duke. We'll answer that;
Our Sister may receive it worse, to have
Her Gentleman assaulted: To our Business lead. [*Exit.*
Glost. I am sorry for thee, Friend, 'tis the Duke's Plea-
Whose Disposition will not be controul'd; [sure,
But I'll entreat for thee.
Kent Pray do not, Sir——
I have watch'd and travell'd hard,
Some Time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle:
Farewell t'ye, Sir. [*Exit* Glost.
All weary, and o'erwatcht,
I feel the drowzy Guest steal on me; take
Advantage heavy Eyes on this kind Slumber,
Not to behold this vile and shameful Lodging. [*Sleeps.*

Enter Edgar.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd,
And by the friendly Hollow of a Tree
Escape the Hunt, no Port is free, no Place
Where Guards and most unusual Vigilance
Do not attend to take me.—How easy now
'Twere to defeat the Malice of my Trale,
And leave the Griefs on my Sword's reeking Point;
But Love detains me from Death's peaceful Call,

Still

Still whiſpering me, *Cordelia*'s in Diſtreſs;
Unkind as ſhe is, I cannot ſee her wretched,
But muſt be near to wait upon her Fortune.
Who knows but the white Minute yet may come,
When *Edgar* may do Service to *Coraelia*.
That charming Hope ſtill ti s me to the Oar
Of painful Life, and makes me to ſubmit
To th' humbleſt Shifts to keep that Life a-foot;
My Face I will beſmear, and knit my Locks,
The Country gives me Proof and Precedent
Of *Bedlam* Beggars, who, with roaring Voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortify'd bare Arms
Pins, Iron-ſpikes, Thorns, Sprigs of Roſemary,
And thus from Sheep-coats, Fillages, and Mills,
Sometimes with Prayers, ſometimes with Lunatick Bans,
Enforce their Charity; poor *Tyrligod*, poor *Tom*,
That's ſomething yet. *Edgar* I am no more. [*Exit.*

Kent *in the Stocks ſtill*; *Enter* Lear *attended.*

Lear. 'Tis ſtrange that they ſhould ſo depart from Home,
And not ſend back our Meſſenger.

Kent. Hail, noble Maſter.

Lear. How! mak'ſt thou this Shame thy Paſtime?
What's he that has ſo much miſtook thy Place,
To ſet thee here?

Kent. It is both He and She, Sir, your Son and Daughter.

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I ſay.

Kent. I ſay, yea.

Lear. By *Jupiter* I ſwear no.

Kent. By *Juno* I ſwear, I ſwear ay.

Lear. They durſt not do't;
They could not, would not do't; 'tis worſe than Murder,
To do upon Reſpect ſuch violent Outrage.
Reſolve me with all modeſt Haſte, which Way
Thou may'ſt deſerve, or they impoſe this Uſage?

Kent. My Lord, when at their Home
I did commend your Highneſs Letters to them,
'Ere I was riſen arriv'd another Poſt,
Steer'd in his Haſte, breathleſs and panting forth

From

From *Goneril*, his Miſtreſs, Salutations,
Whoſe Meſſage being deliver'd, they took Horſe,
Commanding me to follow, and attend
The Leiſure of their Anſwer; which I did;
But meeting that other Meſſenger,
Whoſe Welcome I perceiv'd had poiſon'd mine,
Being the very Fellow that of late
Had ſhewn ſuch Rudeneſs to your Highneſs, I
Having more Man than Wit about me, drew;
On which he rais'd the Houſe with Coward's Cries:
This was the Treſpaſs which your Son and Daughter
Thought worth the Shame you ſee it ſuffer here.

Lear. Oh! how this Spleen ſwells upward to my Heart,
And heaves for Paſſage—Down, climbing Rage;
Thy Element's below; where is this Daughter?

Kent. Within, Sir, at a Maſque.

Enter Gloſter.

Lear. Now *Gloſter!*——Ha!
Deny to ſpeak with me; th'are ſick, th'are weary,
They have travell'd hard To-night;—mere Fetches;
Bring me a better Anſwer.

Gloſt. My dear Lord,
You know the fiery Quality of the Duke—

Lear. Vengeance, Death, Plague, Confuſion,
Fiery! what Quality—Why *Gloſter*, *Gloſter*,
I'd ſpeak with the Duke of *Cornwal*, and his Wife.

Gloſt. I have inform'd 'em ſo

Lear. Inform'd 'em! doſt thou underſtand me, Man?
I tell thee, *Gloſter*,——

Gloſt. Ay, my good Lord.

Lear. The King would ſpeak with *Cornwal*, the dear Father
Would with his Daughter ſpeak, commands her Service.
Are they inform'd of this? My Breath and Blood!
Fiery! the fiery Duke! tell the hot Duke——
No, but not yet, may be he is not well,
Infirmity does ſtill neglect all Office;
I beg his Pardon, and I'll chide my Raſhneſs
That took the indiſpos'd and ſickly Fit
For the ſound Man:—But wherefore ſits he there?
Death on my State, this Act convinces me
That this Retiredneſs of the Duke and her

Is

Is plain Contempt; give me my Servant forth;
Go tell the Duke and his Wife I'd ſpeak with 'em:
Now inſtantly bid 'em come forth and hear me;
Or at their Chamber Door I'll beat the Drum,
'Till it cry ſleep to Death.——

Enter Cornwal *and* Regan.

Oh! are you come?

Duke. Health to the King.

Reg. I am glad to ſee your Highneſs.

Lear. Regan, I think you are: I know what Cauſe
I have to think ſo. Shou'd'ſt thou not be glad
I wou'd divorce me from thy Mother's Tomb?
Beloved *Regan,* thou wilt ſhake to hear
What I ſhall utter: Thou cou'd'ſt n'er h' thought it.
Thy Siſter's naught: O *Regan,* ſhe has ty'd
Kent *here ſet at liberty.*
Ingratitude like a keen Vulture here;
I ſcarce can ſpeak to thee.

Reg. I pray you, Sir, take Patience; I have Hope
That you know leſs to value her Deſert,
Than ſhe to ſlack her Duty.

Lear. Ha! How's that?

Reg. I cannot think my Siſter in the leaſt
Would fail in her Reſpects; but if perchance
She has reſtrain'd the Riots of your Followers,
'Tis on ſuch Grounds, and to ſuch wholeſome Ends,
As clear her from all Blame.

Lear. My Curſes on her.

Reg. O Sir, you 're old,
And ſhou'd content you to be rul'd and led
By ſome Diſcretion that diſcerns your State
Better than yourſelf; therefore, Sir,
Return to our Siſter, and ſay you've wrong'd her.

Lear. Ha! Aſk her Forgiveneſs?
No, no, 'twas my Miſtake, thou didſt not mean ſo;
Dear Daughter, I confeſs that I am old:
Age is unneceſſary; but thou art good,
And wilt diſpenſe with my Infirmity.

Reg. Good Sir, no more of theſe unſightly Paſſions;
Return back to our Siſter.

Lear. Never, *Regan*;
She has abated me of half my Train,
Look'd black upon me, ſtab'd me with her Tongue:
All the ſtored Vengeances of Heav'n fall
On her ungrateful Head; ſtrike her young Bones,
Ye taking Airs with Lameneſs.

Reg. O the bleſt Gods! Thus will you wiſh on me,
When the raſh Mood——

Lear. No, *Regan*, Thou ſhalt never have my Curſe;
Thy tender Nature cannot give thee o'er
To ſuch Impiety: Thou better know'ſt
The Offices of Nature, Bond of Childhood,
And Dues of Gratitude; thou bear'ſt in Mind
The Half o'th' Kingdom, which our Love confer'd
On thee and thine.

Reg. Good Sir, to the Purpoſe.

Lear. Who put my Man i'th' Stocks?

Duke. What Trumpet's that?

Reg. I know't, my Siſter's; this confirms her Letters.
Sir, is your Lady come?

Enter Goneril's *Gentleman.*

Lear. More Torture ſtill:
This is a Slave, whoſe eaſy borrow'd Pride
Dwells in the fickle Grace of her he follows;
A Faſhion-Fop, that ſpends the Day in Dreſſing,
And all to bear his Lady's flattering Meſſage;
That can deliver with a Grace her Lye,
And with as bold a Face bring back a greater.
Out, Varlet, from my Sight.

Duke. What means your Grace?

Lear. Who ſtock'd my Servant? *Regan*, I have Hope
Thou didſt not know it.

Enter Goneril.

Who comes here? Oh Heav'ns!
If you do love old Men; if you, ſweet Sir,
Allow Obedience; if yourſelves are old,
Make it your Caſe, ſend down and take my Part!
Why, *Gorgon*, doſt thou come to hunt me here?
Art not aſham'd to look upon this Beard?
Darkneſs upon my Eyes, they play me falſe;
O *Regan*, wilt thou take her by the Hand?

Gon.

Gon. Why not by th' Hand, Sir? How have I offended?
All's not Offence that Indiſcretion finds,
And Dotage terms ſo.

Lear. Heart, thou art too tough.

Regan. I pray you, Sir, being old, confeſs you are ſo,
If till the Expiration of your Month,
You will return and ſojourn with our Siſter,
Diſmiſſing half your Train, come then to me;
I am now from Home, and out of that Proviſion
That ſhall be needful for your Entertainment.

Lear. Return with her, and fifty Knights diſmiſs'd;
No, rather I'll forſwear all Roofs, and chuſe
To be Companion to the Midnight Wolf,
My naked Head expos'd to th' merc'leſs Air,
Than have my ſmalleſt Wants ſupply'd by her.

Gon. At your Choice, Sir.

Lear. Now, I prithee, Daughter, do not make me mad!
I will not trouble thee, my Child, farewell.
We'll meet no more, no more ſee one another;
Let Shame come when it will, I do not call it,
I do not bid the Thunder-bearer ſtrike,
Nor tell Tales of thee to avenging Heav'n;
Mend when thou canſt, be better at thy Leiſure;
I can be patient, I can ſtay with *Regan*.
I, and my hundred Knights.

Regan. Your Pardon, Sir;
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit Welcome.

Lear. Is this well ſpoken now?

Reg. My Siſter treats you fair; what! fifty Followers?
Is it not well? what ſhould you need of more?

Gon. Why might not you, my Lord, receive Attendance
From thoſe whom ſhe calls Servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why not, my Lord? If then they chance to ſlack
We cou'd controul 'em.——If you come to me, [you,
For now I ſee the Danger, I intreat you
To bring but Five and twenty; to no more
Will I give Place.

Lear. Hold now, my Temper; ſtand this Bolt unmov'd,
And I am Thunder-Proof;
The wicked, when compar'd with the more wick-

Seem beautiful ; and not to be the worſt,
Stands in ſome Rank of Praiſe. Now, *Goneril*,
Thou art innocent agen, I'll go with thee ;
Thy fifty yet does double Five and Twenty,
And thou art twice her Love.

Gon. Hear me, my Lord.
What need you Five and Twenty, Ten, or Five,
To follow in a Houſe, where twice ſo many
Have a Command t'attend you ?

Reg. What need one ?

Lear. Blood ! Fire ! here —— Leproſies and blueſt
Room, room for Hell to belch her Horrors up, [Plagues !
And drench the *Circes* in a Stream of Fire ;
Hark, how th' Infernals eccho to my Rage
Their Whips and Snakes.———

Reg. How leud a Thing is Paſſion !

Gon. So old and ſtomachful.

Lightning and Thunder.

Lear. Heav'ns drop your Patience down ;
You ſee me here, ye Gods, a poor old Man,
As full of Grief as Age, wretched in both——
I'll bear no more. No, you unnatural Hags,
I will have ſuch Revenges on you both,
That all the World ſhall——I will do ſuch Things,
What they are yet I know not, but they ſhall be
The Terrors of the Earth ; you think I'll weep, [*Thunder*
This Heart ſhall break into a thouſand Pieces [*again.*
Before I'll weep ———O Gods ! I ſhall go mad. [*Exit.*

Duke. 'Tis a wild Night, come out o'th' Storm. [*Ex.*

The End of the Second Act.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE *A Desert Heath.*

Enter Lear *and* Kent *in the Storm.*

Lear. BLOW Winds, and burst your Cheeks, rage louder yet,
Fantastick Lightning, singe, singe my white Head;
Spout Cataracts, and Hurricanoes fall,
Till you have drown'd the Towns and Palaces
Of proud ingrateful Man.

Kent. Not all my best Intreatises can persuade him
Into some needful Shelter, or to 'bide
This poor slight Cov'ring on his aged Head,
Expos'd to this wild War of Earth and Heav'n.

Lear. Rumble thy fill, fight Whirlwind, Rain and Fire;
Not Fire, Wind, Rain, or Thunder are my Daughters:
I tax not you, ye Elements, with Unkindness;
I never gave you Kingdoms, call'd you Children;
You owe me no Obedience, then let fall
Your horrible Pleasure; here I stand your Slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old Man;
Yet will I call you servile Ministers,
That have with two pernicious Daughters join'd
Their high engender'd Battle against a Head
So old and white as mine; Oh! oh! 'tis foul.

Kent. Hard by, Sir, is a Hovel, that will lend
Some shelter from this Tempest.

Lear. I will forget my Nature, what! so kind a Fa-
Ay, there's the Point. [ther!

Kent. Consider, good my Liege. Things that love Night,

Love not such Nights as this ; these wrathful Skies
Frighten the very Wanderers o' th' Dark,
And make 'em keep their Caves ; such drenching Rain,
Such Sheets of Fire, such Claps of horrid Thunder,
Such Groans of roaring Winds, have ne'er been known.

Lear. Let the great Gods,
That keep the dreadful Pudder o'er our Heads,
Find out their Enemies now. Tremble, thou Wretch,
That hast within thee undiscover'd Crimes !
Hide that bloody Hand, ———
Thou perjur'd Villain, holy Hypocrite,
That drink'st the Widow's Tears ; sigh now, and cry
These dreadful Summoners Grace, I am a Man
More sin'd against, than sinning.

Kent. Good Sir, to th' Hovel.

Lear. My Wit begins to burn,
Come on my Boy, how dost my Boy ? Art cold ?
I'm cold myself ; shew this Straw, my Fellow ;
The Art of our Necessity is strange,
And can make vile Things precious ; my poor Knave,
Cold as I am at Heart, I've one Place there [*Louder Storm.*
That's sorry yet for thee. [*Exit.*

Gloster's *Palace.* *Enter* Bastard.

Bast. The Storm is in our louder Rev'lings drown'd.
Thus wou'd I reign, cou'd I but mount a Throne.
The Riots of these proud imperial Sisters
Already have impos'd the galling Yoke
Of Taxes, and hard Impositions, on
The drudging Peasants Necks, who bel'ow out
Their loud Complaints in vain—Triumphant Queens !
With what Assurance do they treat the Crowd ?
Oh ! for a Taste of such Majestick Beauty,
Which none but my hot Veins are fit t'engage ;
Nor are my Wishes desp'rate, for even now,
During the Banquet, I observ'd their Glances
Shot thick at me ; and, as they left the Room,
Each cast, by Stealth, a kind inviting Smile,
The happy Earnest ——— ha !

Two Servants, from several Entrances, deliver him each a Letter, and Ex.

Where Merit is so transparent, not to behold it [*Reads.*

Were

Were Blindneſs, and not to reward it Ingratitude.

Goneril.

Enough! Blind and ungrateful ſhould I be
Not to obey the Summons of this Oracle.
Now for a ſecond Letter: [*Opens the other.*
If Modeſty be not your Enemy, doubt not to [*Reads.*
Find me your Friend.

Regan.

Excellent *Sybil!* O my glowing Blood!
I am already ſick of Expectation,
And pant for the Poſſeſſion.——— Here *Gloſter* comes
With Buſineſs on his Brow; be huſh'd my Joys.

Gloſt. I come to ſeek thee, *Edmund*, to impart a Buſineſs of Importance; I know thy loyal Heart is touch'd to ſee the Cruelty of theſe ungrateful Daughters againſt our Royal Maſter.

Baſt. Moſt ſavage aud unnatural.

Gloſt. This Change in the State ſits uneaſy. The Commons repine aloud at their female Tyrants; already they cry out for the Re-inſtalment of their good old King, whoſe Injuries, I fear, will enflame 'em into Mutiny.

Baſt. 'Tis to be hop'd, not fear'd.

Gloſt. Thou haſt it, Boy, 'tis to be hop'd indeed;
On me they caſt their Eyes, and hourly court me
To lead 'em on; and whilſt this Head is mine,
I'm theirs. A little covert Craft, my Boy,
And then for open Action; 'twill be Employment
Worthy ſuch honeſt daring Souls as thine.
Thou, *Edmund*, art my truſty Emiſſary.
Haſte on the Spur, at the firſt Break of Day [*Gives him*
With theſe Diſpatches to the Duke of *Cambray*; *Letters.*
You know what mortal Feuds have always flam'd
Between this Duke of *Cornwal*'s Family, and his;
Full Twenty Thouſand Mountaineers
Th' inveterate Prince will ſend to our Aſſiſtance.
Diſpatch; commend us to his Grace, and proſper.

Baſt. Yes, credulous old Man,
I will commend you to his Grace,
His Grace the Duke of *Cornwal*——inſtantly,
To ſhew him theſe Contents in thy own Character,

And

And seal'd with thy own Signet; then forthwith
The chol'rick Duke gives Sentence on thy Life;
And to my Hand thy vast Revenues,
To glut my Pleasure that 'till now has starv'd.

Gloster *going off is met by* Cordelia *ent'ring*, Bastard *observing at a Distance.*

Cord. Turn, *Gloster*, turn, by the sacred Pow'rs
I do conjure you give my Griefs a Hearing;
You must, you shall, nay, I am sure you will,
For you were always styl'd the Just and Good.

Glost. What wou'dst thou, Princess? rise, and speak thy [Griefs.

Cord. Nay, you shall promise to redress 'em too,
Or here I'll kneel for ever; I entreat
Thy Succour for a Father, and a King,
An injur'd Father, and an injur'd King.

Bast. O charming Sorrow! How her Tears adorn her,
Like Dew on Flow'rs; but she is virtuous,
And I must quench this hopeless Fire i'th' kindling.

Glost. Consider, Princess,
For whom thou beg'st, 'tis for the King that wrong'd thee.

Cord. O name not that; he did not, cou'd not wrong me.
Nay, muse not, *Gloster*, for it is too likely
This injur'd King, e'er this, is past your Aid,
And gone distracted with his savage Wrongs.

Bast. I'll gaze no more,—and yet my Eyes are charm'd.

Cord. Or, what if it be worse;
As 'tis too probable, this furious Night
Has pierc'd his tender Body; the bleak Winds
And cold Rain chill'd, or Lightning struck him dead;
If it be so, your Promise is discharg'd,
And I have only one poor Boon to beg,
That you'd convey me to his breathless Trunk,
With my torn Robes to wrap his hoary Head,
With my torn Hair to bind his Hands and Feet,
Then with a Show'r of Tears
To wash his Clay-smear'd Cheeks, and die beside him.

Glost. Rise, fair *Cordelia*, thou hast Piety
Enough t'atone for both thy Sister's Crimes;
I have already plotted to restore
My injur'd Master, and thy Virtue tells me
We shall succeed, and suddenly. [*Exit.*

Cord.

Cord. Diſpatch, *Arante*,
Provide me a Diſguiſe ; we'll inſtantly
Go ſeek the King, and bring him ſome Relief.
Ar. How, Madam ! Are you ignorant
Of what your impious Siſters have decreed ?
Immediate Death for any that relieve him.
Cord. I cannot dread the Furies in this Caſe.
Ar. In ſuch a Night as this ? Conſider, Madam,
For many Miles about there's ſcarce a Buſh
To ſhelter in.
Cord. Therefore no Shelter for the King,
And more our Charity to find him out :
What have not Women dar'd for vicious Love ?
And we'll be ſhining Proofs that they can dare
For Piety as much. Blow Winds, and Lightnings fall,
Bold in my Virgin Innocence I'll fly,
My Royal Father to relieve or die. [*Exit.*
Baſt. Provide me a Diſguiſe, we'll inſtantly
Go ſeek the King ;—ha ! ha ! A lucky Change,
That Virtue which I fear'd would be my Hind'rance,
Has prov'd the Bond to my Deſign ;
I'll bribe two Ruffians ſhall at Diſtance follow,
And ſeize 'em in ſome deſert Place ; and there
Whilſt one retains her, t'other ſhall return
T'inform me where ſhe's lodg'd ; I'll be diſguis'd too :
Whilſt they are poching for me, I'll to the Duke
With theſe Diſpatches, then to the Field,
Where, like the vig'rous *Jove*, I will enjoy
This *Semele* in a Storm ; 'twill deaf her Cries,
Like Drums in Battle ; leſt her Groans ſhould pierce
My pitying Ear, and make the am'rous Fight leſs fierce.
[*Exit.*

Storm ſtill. The Field Scene. Enter Lear *and* Kent.
Kent. Here is the Place, my Lord ; good my Lord, enter;
The Tyranny of this open Night's too rough
For Nature to endure.
Lear. Let me alone.
Kent. Good my Lord, enter.
Lear. Wilt break my Heart ?
Kent. Beſeech you, Sir.

Lear.

Lear. Thou think'ſt 'tis much that this contentious Storm
Invades us to the Skin; ſo 'tis to thee;
But where the greater Malady is fixt,
The leſſer is ſcarce felt: The Tempeſt in my Mind
Does from my Senſes take all Feeling elſe,
Save what beats there. Filial Ingratitude!
Is it not as this Mouth ſhould tear this Hand
For lifting Food to't?—But I'll puniſh—Home!
No, I will no more; in ſuch a Night
To ſhut me out——Pour on, I will endure——
In ſuch a Night as this: O *Regan*, *Goneril!*
Your old kind Father, whoſe frank Heart gave all;
O that Way Madneſs lies; let me ſhun that;
No more of that.

Kent. See, my Lord, here's the Entrance.

Lear. Well, I'll go in
And paſs it all; I'll pray, and then I'll ſleep.
Poor naked Wretches, whereſoe'er you are,
That 'bide the pelting of this pitileſs Storm,
How ſhall your houſeleſs Heads and unfed Sides
Suſtain this Shock? Your Raggedneſs defend you
From Seaſons ſuch as theſe.
Oh! I have ta'en too little Care of this!
Take Phyſick, Pomp,
Expoſe thyſelf to feel what Wretches feel,
That thou may'ſt caſt the Superflux to them,
And ſhew the Heav'ns more juſt.

Edgar *in the Hovel.*

Five Fathom and a half, poor *Tom.*

Kent. What art thou that doſt grumble there i'th'Straw? Come forth.

Edgar. Away! The foul Fiend follows me—Through the ſharp Haw-thorn blows the cold Wind——Mum, go to the Bed and warm thee——Ha! What do I ſee? By all my Griefs the poor old King bareheaded,
And drench'd in this fowl Storm! Profeſſing *Syren*,
Are all your Proteſtations come to this?

Lear. Tell me, Fellow, didſt thou give all to thy Daughters?

Edgar. Who gives any Thing to poor *Tom*, whom the foul Fiend has led through Fire, and through Flame, through Buſhes,

Buſhes, and Bogs; that has laid Knives under his Pillow, and Halters in his Pew; that has made him proud of Heart to ride on a bay trotting Horſe, over four inched Bridges, to courſe his own Shadow for a Traitor. —— Bleſs thy five Wits. *Tom*'s a cold [*Shivers.*] Bleſs thee from Whirlwinds, Star-blaſting and taking; do poor *Tom* ſome Charity, whom the foul Fiend vexes.—— Sa, ſa; there I could have him now, and there, and there again.

Lear. Have his Daughters brought him to this Paſs? Couldſt thou ſave nothing? Didſt thou give them all?

Kent. He has no Daughters, Sir.

Lear. Death, Traytor, nothing could have ſubdued To ſuch a Lowneſs, but his unkind Daughters. [Nature

Edg. Pillicock ſat upon Pillicock Hill: Hallo, hallo, [hallo.

Lear. Is it the Faſhion that diſregarded Fathers Should have ſuch little Mercy on their Fleſh? Judicious Puniſhment, 'twas his Fleſh begot Thoſe Pelican Daughters.

Edg. Take heed of the fow Fiend; obey thy Parents; keep thy Word juſtly; ſwear not; commit not with Man's ſworn Spouſe; ſet not thy ſweet Heart on proud Array; *Tom*'s a cold.

Lear. What haſt thou been?

Edg. A Serving-man, proud of Heart, that curl'd my Hair, uſed Perfume and Waſhes; that ſerved the Luſt of my Miſtreſs's Heart, and did the Act of Darkneſs with her; ſwore as many Oaths as I ſpoke Words; and broke them all in the ſweet Face of Heaven. Let not the Paint, nor the Patch, nor the Ruſtling of Silks, betray thy poor Heart to Woman; keep thy Foot out of Brothels, thy Hand out of Plackets, thy Pen from Creditors Books, and defy the foul Fiend. ——Still through the Hawthorn blows the cold Wind.—Seſs, Suum, Mun, Nonny, Dolphin, my Boy!—Hiſt, the Boy, the Boy! Seſee! Soft! let him trot by.

Lear. Death! thou wert better in thy Grave than thus to anſwer with thy uncover'd Body, this Extremity of the Sky. And yet conſider him well. and Man's no more than this: Thou art indebted to the Worm for no Silk, to the Beaſt for no Hide, to the Cat for no Perfume.

Perfume.——Ha! here's two of us are ſophiſticated; thou art the Thing itſelf, unaccomodated Man is no more than ſuch a poor bare-fork'd Animal as thou art.
Off, off, ye vain Diſguiſes, empty Lendings;
I'll be my original ſelf; quick, quick, uncaſe me.

Kent. Defend his Wits, good Heaven!

Lear. One Point I had forgot; what's your Name?

Edg. Poor *Tom*, that eats the ſwimming Frog, the Wallnut and the Water-Nut; that in the Fury of his Heart, when the foul Fiend rages, eats Cow-dung for Sallads, ſwallows the old Rat, and the Ditch-Dog that drinks the green Mantle of the ſtanding Pool, that's whipt from Tithing to Tithing, that has three Suits to his Back, ſix Shirts to his Body.

Horſe to ride, and Weapon to wear,
But Rats and Mice, and ſuch ſmall Deer.
Have been *Tom*'s Food for ſev'n long Year.

Beware, my Follower; Peace, Smulk'n, Peace, thou foul Fiend.

Lear. One Word more, but be ſure true Counſel; tell me, is a Madman a Gentleman or a Yeoman?

Kent. I fear'd 'twou'd come to this; his Wits are gone.

Edg. Fraterreto calls me, and tells me *Nero* is an Angler in the Lake of Darkneſs. Pray, *Innocent*, and beware the foul Fiend.

Lear. Right, ha! ha! Was it not pleaſant to have a thouſand with red hot Spits come hiſſing in upon 'em.

Edg. My Tears begin to take his Part ſo much
They mar my Counterfeiting. [*Aſide.*

Lear. The little Dogs and all, Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, ſee they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his Head at 'em; avaunt, ye Curs.

Be thy Mouth, or black or white,
Tooth that poiſons if it bite;
Maſtiff, Greyhound, Mungrel, Grim.
Hound or Spaniel, Brach or Hym;
Bob-Tail, Hight, or Trundle-Tail,
Tom will make 'em weep and wail;
For with throwing thus my Head,
Dogs leap the Hatch, and all are fled.

Ud,

Ud, de, de, de, See, fee, fee, Come, march to Wakes, and Fairs, and Market-Towns.——Poor *Tom*, thy Horn is dry.

Lear. You, Sir, I entertain you for one of my Hundred, only I do not like the Fashion of your Garments; you'll say they're *Persian*, but no Matter, let 'em be changed.

Enter Gloster.

Edg. This is the foul *Flibertigibet*; he begins at Curfew, and walks at first Cock; he gives the Web, and the Pin; knits the Elflock; squints the Eye, and makes the Hair-Lip; mildews the white Wheat, and hurts the poor Creature of the Earth.

Swithin footed thrice the Cold,
He met the Night-Mare and her Nine-Fold,
'Twas there he did appoint her;
He bid her alight, and her Troth plight,
And arroynt the Witch arroynt her.

Glost. What, has your Grace no better Company?

Edg. The Prince of Darkness is a Gentleman; *Modo* he is call'd, and *Mahu*.

Glost. Go with me, Sir; hard by I have a Tenant. My Duty cannot suffer me to obey in all your Daughters hard Commands, who have enjoin'd me to make fast my Doors, and let this tyrannous Night take hold upon you. Yet have I ventur'd to come to seek you out, and bring you where both Fire and Food are ready.

Kent. Good my Lord, take his Offer.

Lear. First let me talk with this Philosopher; Say, *Staggerite*, what is the Cause of Thunder?

Glost. Beseech you, Sir, go with me.

Lear. I'll take a Word with this same learned *Theban*. What is your Study?

Edg. How to prevent the Fiend, and to kill Vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you a Word in private.

Kent. His Wits are quite unsettled; good Sir, let's force him hence.

Glost. Can'st blame him? His Daughters seek his Death; this Bedlam but disturbs him the more. Fellow, be gone.

Edg. Child *Rowland* to the dark Tow'r came,

His Word was ſtill Fi, Fo, and Fum,
I ſmell the Blood of a *Britiſh* Man.—— Oh! Torture!
[*Exit.*

Gloſt. Now, I prithee Friend, let's take him in our Arms, and carry him where he ſhall meet both Welcome Good Sir, along with us. [and Protection.

Lear. You ſay right, let 'em anatomize *Regan*, for what breeds about her Heart; is there any Cauſe in Nature for theſe hard Hearts?

Kent. I beſeech your Grace.

Lear. Hiſt! ——Make no Noiſe, make no Noiſe—— ſo, ſo; we'll to Supper i'th' Morning. *Exeunt.*

Enter Cordelia *and* Arante.

Ar. Dear Madam, reſt ye here, our Search is vain,
Look, here's a Shed; beſeech ye, enter here.

Cord. Prithee go thyſelf, ſeek thy own Eaſe;
Where the Mind's free, the Body's delicate;
This Tempeſt but diverts me from the Thought
Of what would hurt me more.

Enter two Ruffians.

1. *Ruff.* We have dog'd 'em far enough; this Place is private; I'll keep 'em Priſoners here within this Hovel,
Whilſt you return and bring Lord *Edmund* hither;
But help me firſt to houſe 'em

2. *Ruff.* Nothing but this dear Devil [*Shews Gold.*
Shou'd have drawn me through all this Tempeſt;
But to our Work.

They ſeize Cordelia *and* Arante, *who ſhriek out.*

Soft, Madam, we are Friends; diſpatch, I ſay.

Cord. Help, Murder, Help; Gods! Some kind Thunderbolt
To ſtrike me dead.

Enter Edgar.

Edg. What Cry was that?—Ha! Women ſeiz'd by Ruffians!
Is this a Place and Time for Villainy?
Avaunt, ye Bloodhounds. *Drives them with his Quarter-ſtaff.*

Both. The Devil, the Devil. [*Run off.*

Edg. O ſpeak, what are ye that appear to be
O' th' tender Sex, and yet unguarded wander
Through the dread Mazes of this dreadful Night,
Where (though at full) the clouded Moon ſcarce darts
Imperfect Glimmerings? *Cord.*

Cord. Firſt ſay, what art thou ?
Our Guardian Angel, that wert pleas'd t'aſſume
That horrid Shape to fright the Raviſhers ?
We'll kneel to thee.
Edg. O my tumultuous Blood !
By all my trembling Veins, *Cordelia*'s Voice ;
'Tis ſhe herſelf !——My Senſes ſure conform
To my wild Garb, and I am mad indeed. [*Aſide.*
Cord. Whete'er thou art, befriend a wretched Virgin ;
And, if thou canſt, direct our weary Search.
Edg. Who relieves poor *Tom*, that ſleeps on the Nettle,
With the Hedge-pig for his Pillow.
Whilſt *Smug* ply'd the Bellows,
She truck'd with her Fellows ;
The freckle-fac'd Mab
Was a Blouze and a Drab,
Yet *Swithin* made *Oberon* jealous.—Oh! Torture.
Ar. Alack ! Madam, a poor wand'ring Lunatick.
Cord. And yet his Language ſeem'd but now well tem-
Speak, Friend, to one more wretched than thyſelf : [per'd,
And if thou haſt one Interval of Senſe,
Inform us, if thou canſt, where we may find
A poor old Man, who through this Heath has ſtray'd
The tedious Night.——Speak, ſaw'ſt thou ſuch a one ?
Edg. The King her Father, whom ſhe's come to ſeek,
Through all the Terrors of this Night : O Gods ! [*Aſide.*
That ſuch amazing Piety, ſuch Tenderneſs
Shou'd yet to me be cruel.
Yes, fair one, ſuch a one was lately here,
And is convey'd by ſome that came to ſeek him,
To a neighb'ring Cottage ; but diſtinctly where,
I know not.
Cord. Bleſſings on 'em ;
Let's find him out, *Arante*, for thou ſeeſt
We are in Heaven's Protection. [*Going off.*
Edg. O *Cordelia !*
Cord. Ha !——Thou know'ſt my Name.
Edg. As you did once know *Edgar*'s
Cord. Edgar !
Edg. The poor Remains of *Edgar*, what your Scorn
has left him.

Cord. Do we wake, *Arante?*

Edg. My Father ſeeks my Life, which I preſerv'd,
In Hopes of ſome bleſt Minute to oblige
Diſtreſt *Cordelia*, and the Gods have given it;
That Thought alone prevail'd with me to take
This frantick Dreſs, to make the Earth my Bed,
With theſe Bare Limbs all Change of Seaſons 'bide,
Noon's ſcorching Heat, and Midnight's piercing Cold,
To feed on Offals, and to drink with Herds,
To combat with the Winds, and be the Sport
Of Clowns, or what's more wretched yet, their Pity.

Ar. Was ever Tale ſo full of Miſery!

Edg. But ſuch a Fall as this I grant was due
To my aſpiring Love, for 'twas preſumptuous,
Though not preſumptuouſly purſu'd;
For well you know I wore my Flames conceal'd,
And ſilent as the Lamps that burn in Tombs,
Till you perceiv'd my Grief, with modeſt Grace
Drew forth the Secret, and then ſeal'd my Pardon.

Cord. You had your Pardon, nor can you challenge more.

Edg. What do I challenge more!
Such Vanity agrees not with theſe Rags:
When in my proſp'rous State, rich *Gloſter*'s Heir.
You ſilenc'd my Pretences, and enjoin'd me
To trouble you upon that Theme no more;
Then what Reception muſt Love's Language find
From theſe bare Limbs and Beggar's humble Weeds!

Cord. Such as a Voice of Pardon to a Wretch condemn'd;
Such as the Shouts
Of ſuccouring Forces to a Town beſieg'd.

Edg. Ah! What new Method now of Cruelty?

Cord. Come to my Arms, thou deareſt, beſt of Men,
And take the kindeſt Vows that e'er were ſpoke
By a proteſting Maid.

Edg. Is't poſſible?

Cord. By the dear vital Stream that bathes my Heart,
Theſe hallowed Rags of thine, and naked Virtue,
Theſe abject Taſſels, theſe fantaſtick Shreds,
(Ridiculous even to the meaneſt Clown)
To me are dearer than the richeſt Pomp
Of purple Monarchs.

Edg.

Edg. Generous charming Maid,
The Gods alone that made, can rate thy Worth!
This moſt amazing Excellence ſhall be
Fame's Triumph in ſucceeding Ages, when
Thy bright Example ſhall adorn the Scene,
And teach the Wor'd Perfection.
Cord. Cold and weary,
We'll reſt a while, *Arante*, on that Straw.
Then forward to find out the poor old King.
Edg. Look, I have Flint and Steel, the Implements
Of wand'ring Lunaticks: I'll ſtrike a Light,
And make a Fire beneath this Shed, to dry
Thy Storm-drench'd Garments, 'e're thou lie to reſt thee;
Then fierce and wakeful as th' *Heſperian* Dragon,
I'll watch beſide thee to protect thy Sleep;
Mean while the Stars ſhall dart their kindeſt Beams.
And Angels viſit my *Cordelia*'s Dreams. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *The Palace.*

Enter Cornwal, Regan, Baſtard, *Servants.* Cornwal *with* Gloſter's *Letters.*

Duke. I will have my Revenge 'e're I depart his Houſe.
Regan, ſee here, a Plot upon our State;
'Tis *Gloſter*'s Character, that has betray'd
His double Truſt of Subject and of Hoſt.
Reg. Then double be our Vengeance; this confirms
Th' Intelligence that we now receiv'd,
That he has been this Night to ſeek the King;
But who, Sir, was the kind Diſcoverer?
Duke. Our *Eagle*, quick to 'ſpy, and fierce to ſeize:
Our truſty *Edmund.*
Reg. 'Twas a noble Service;
O *Cornwal*, take him to thy deepeſt Truſt,
And wear him as a Jewel at thy Heart.
Baſt. Think, Sir, how hard a Fortune I ſuſtain,
That makes me thus repent of ſerving you; [*Weeps.*
O that this Treaſon had not been, or I
Not the Diſcoverer.
Duke. Edmund, thou ſhall find

A Father in our Love, and from this Minute
We call thee Earl of *Gloſter* ; but there yet
Remains another Juſtice to be done,
And that's to puniſh this diſcarded Traitor ;
But leſt thy tender Nature ſhould relent
At his juſt Suffering, nor brook the Sight,
We wiſh thee to withdraw.

Reg. The *Grotto*, Sir, within the lower Grove [*To*
Has Privacy to ſuit a Mourner's Thought. [Edmund *aſide.*

Baſt And there I may expect a Comforter,
Ha, Madam ?

Reg. What may happen, Sir, I know not,
But 'twas a Friend's Advice. [*Exit* Baſtard.

Duke. Bring in the Traitor.

Gloſter *brought in.*

Bind faſt his Arms

Gloſt. What mean your Graces ?
You are my Gueſts, pray do me no foul Play.

Duke. Bind him, I ſay, hard, harder yet.

Reg. Now, Traitor, thou ſhalt find———

Duke. Speak, Rebel, where haſt thou ſent the King ?
Whom, Spight of our Decree, thou ſaw'ſt laſt Night.

Gloſt. I'm ty'd to th' Stake, and muſt ſtand the Courſe.

Reg. Say where, and why thou haſt conceal'd him ?

Gloſt. Becauſe I wou'd not ſee thy cruel Hands
Tear out his poor old Eyes, nor thy fierce Siſter
Carve his anointed Fleſh ; but I ſhall ſee
The ſwift wing'd Vengeance overtake ſuch Children.

Duke. See't thou ſhalt never ; Slaves perform your Work,
Out with thoſe treacherous Eyes ; diſpatch, I ſay,
If thou ſeek Vengeance———

Gloſt. He that will think to live, 'till he be old——
Give me ſome Help.—— O cruel ! oh ! ye Gods.

[*They put out his Eyes.*

Serv. Hold, hold, my Lord, I bar your Cruelty ;
I cannot love your Safety, and give Way
To ſuch a barbarous Practice.

Duke. Ha ! my Villain !

Serv. I have been your Servant from my Infancy,
But better Service have I never done you
Than with this Boldneſs.——

Duke.

Duke. Take thy Death, Slave.

Serv. Nay, then Revenge whilſt yet my Blood is warm. [*Fight.*

Reg. Help here—— are you not hurt, my Lord?

Gloſt. Edmund, enkindle all the Sparks of Nature
To quit this horrid Act.

Reg. Out, treacherous Villain,
Thou call'ſt on him who hates thee; it was he
That broach'd thy Treaſon, ſhew'd us thy Diſpatches:
There—read, and ſave the *Cambrian* Prince a Labour.
If thy Eyes fail thee, call for Spectacles.

Gloſt. O my Folly!
Then *Edgar* was abuſed; kind Gods forgive me that.

Reg. How is't, my Lord?

Duke, Turn out that eyeleſs Villain, let him ſmell
His Way to *Cambray*; throw this Slave upon a Dunghill.
Regan, I bleed apace; give me your Arm.

Gloſt. All dark and comfortleſs!
Where are thoſe various Objects that, but now,
Employ'd my buſy Eyes? Where thoſe Eyes?
Dead are their piercing Rays, that lately ſhot
O'er flow'ry Vales to diſtant ſnowy Hills,
And drew with Joy the vaſt Horizon in.
Theſe groping Hands are now my only Guides,
And Feeling all my Sight.
O Miſery! What Words can ſound my Grief!
Shut from the Living whilſt among the Living;
Dark as the Grave amidſt the buſtling World.
At once from Buſ'neſs and from Pleaſure bar'd,
No more to view the Beauty of the Spring,
Nor ſee the Face of Kindred, or of Friend.
Yet ſtill one Way th' extreameſt Fate affords,
And ev'n the Blind can find the Way to Death.
Muſt I then tamely die, and unreveng'd?
So *Lear* may fall: No, with theſe bleeding Rings
I will preſent me to the pitying Crowd,
And with the Rhetorick of theſe dropping Veins
Enflame 'em to revenge their King and me;
Then when the glorious Miſchief's on the Wing,
This Lumber from ſome Precipice I'll throw,
And daſh it on the ragged Flint below;

Whence

Whence my freed Soul to her bright Sphere ſhall fly,
Through boundleſs Orbs eternal Regions 'ſpy,
And (like the Sun) be all one glorious Eye. [*Exit.*

The End of the Third Act.

ACT IV.

SCENE *A Grotto.*

Edmund *and* Regan *amorouſly ſeated, liſtening to ſoft Muſic.*

Baſt. WHY were thoſe Beauties made another's Right,
Which none can prize like me? Charming Queen,
Take my blooming Youth; for ever fold me
In thoſe ſoft Arms; lull me in endleſs Sleep,
That I may dream of Pleaſures too tranſporting
For Life to bear.

Reg. Live, live my *Gloſter*,
And feel no Death but that of ſwooning Joy!
I yield thee Bliſſes on no harder Terms,
Than that thou continue to be happy.

Baſt. This Jealouſy is yet more kind; is't poſſible
That I ſhould wander from a Paradiſe
To feed on ſickly Weeds? Such Sweets live here,
That Conſtancy will be no Virtue in me.
And yet muſt I forthwith go meet her Siſter, [*Aſide.*
To whom I muſt proteſt as much———
Suppoſe it be the ſame; why, beſt of all,

And

And I have then my Leſſon 'ready conn'd.
Reg. Wear this Remembrance of me.—— I dare now
[*Gives him a Ring.*
Abſent myſelf no longer from the Duke,
Whoſe Wound grows dangerous, I hope mortal.
Baſt. And let this happy Image of your *Gloſter*
[*Pulling out a Picture, drops a Note.*
Lodge in that Breaſt where all his Treaſure lies. [*Exit.*
Reg. To this braveYouth aWoman's blooming Beauties
Are due; my Fool uſurps my Bed——What's here?
Confuſion on my Eyes. [*Reads.*
Where Merit is tranſparent, not to behold it were
Blindneſs, and not to reward it, Ingratitude.
Goneril.
Vexatious Accident! Yet fortunate too:
My Jealouſy's confirm'd, and I am taught
To caſt for my Defence—— *Enter an Officer.*
Now,what mean thoſe Shouts, and this thy haſtyEntrance?
Off. A moſt ſurpriſing and a ſudden Change;
The Peaſants are all up in Mutiny,
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on
To ſtorm your Palace.
Reg. On what Provocation?
Off. At laſt Day's publick Feſtival, to which
The Yeomen from all Quarters had repair'd;
Old *Gloſter*, whom you late depriv'd of Sight,
(His Veins yet ſtreaming freſh) preſents himſelf,
Proclaims your Cruelty, and their Oppreſſion,
With the King's Injuries; which ſo enrag'd 'em,
That now that Mutiny, which long had crept,
Takes Wing, and threatens your beſt Pow'rs.
Reg. White-liver'd Slave!
Our Forces rais'd, and led by valiant *Edmund*,
Shall drive this Monſter of Rebellion back
To her dark Cell; young *Gloſter*'s Arm allays
The Storm, his Father's feeble Breath did raiſe. [*Exit.*
The Field S C E N E, *Enter* Edgar.
Edg. The loweſt and moſt abject Thing of Fortune
Stands ſtill in Hope, and is ſecure from Fear;
The lamentable Change is from the Beſt,
The Worſt returns to Better.—Who comes here?
Enter

Enter Gloſter, *led by an old Man.*

My Father poorly led! depriv'd of Sight!
The precious Stones torn from their bleeding Rings!
Something I heard of this inhuman Deed,
But diſbeliev'd it, as an Act too horrid
For the hot Hell of a curſt Woman's Fury;
When will the Meaſure of my Woes be full?

Gloſt. Revenge, thou art on foot, Succeſs attend thee.
Well have I ſold my Eyes, if the Event
Prove happy for the injur'd King.

Old M. O, my good Lord, I have been your Tenant, and your Father's Tenant theſe fourſcore Years.

Gloſt. Away, get thee away, good Friend be gone; Thy Comforts can do me no Good at all,
Thee they may hurt.

Old M You cannot ſee your Way.

Gloſt. I have no Way, and therefore want no Eyes,
I ſtumbled when I ſaw: O dear Son *Edgar*,
The Food of thy abuſed Father's Wrath,
Might I but live to ſee thee in my Touch,
I'd ſay, I had Eyes agen.

Edg. Alas, he's ſenſible that I was wrong'd,
And ſhould I own myſelf, his tender Heart
Would break betwixt th' Extreams of Grief and Joy.

Old M. How now, who's there?

Edg. A Charity for poor *Tom*. Play fair, and defy the foul Fiend.
O Gods! And muſt I ſtill purſue this Trade, [*Aſide.*
Trifling beneath ſuch Loads of Miſery?

Old M. 'Tis poor mad *Tom*.

Gloſt. In the late Storm, I ſuch a Fellow ſaw,
Which made me think a Man a Worm.
Where is the Lunatick?

Old M. Here, my Lord.

Gloſt. Get thee now away; if for my Sake
Thou wilt o'er take us hence a Mile, or two,
I'th' Way to *Dover*, do't for ancient Love,
And bring ſome Cov'ring for this naked Wretch,
Whom I'll intreat to lead me.

Old M. Alack, my Lord, he's mad. (Blind.

Gloſt. 'Tis the Time's Plague when Mad-men lead the
Do as I bid thee.

Old

Old M. I'll bring him the beſt 'parrel, that I have,
Come on't what will. [*Exit.*

Gloſt. Sirrah, naked Fellow.

Edg. Poor *Tom*'s a cold—I cannot fool it longer,
And yet I muſt.——Bleſs thy ſweet Eyes, they bleed ;
Believ't poor *Tom* ev'n weeps his blind to ſee 'em.

Gloſt Know'ſt thou the Way to *Dover ?*

Edg. Both Stile and Gate, Horſe-way and Foot-path ; poor *Tom* has been ſcared out of his good Wits ; bleſs every true Man's Son from the foul Fiend.

Gloſt. Here take this Purſe ; that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier. Heav'n deal ſo ſtill.
Thus let the griping Uſurer's Hoard be ſcatter'd,
So Diſtribution ſhall undo Exceſs,
And each Man have enough. Doſt thou know *Dover ?*

Edg. Ay, Maſter.

Gloſt. There's a Cliff, whoſe high and bending Head
Looks dreadfully down on the roaring Deep ;
Bring me but to the very Brink of it,
And I'll repay the Poverty thou bear'ſt
With ſomething rich about me ; from that Place
I ſhall no Leading need.

Edg. Give me thy Arm : Poor *Tom* ſhall guide thee.

Gloſt. Soft, for I hear the Tread of Paſſengers.

Enter Kent *and* Cordelia.

Cord. Ah me ! Your Fear's too true, it was the King ;
I ſpoke but now with ſome that met him
As mad as the vex'd Sea, ſinging aloud,
Crown'd with rank Femiter, and and Furrow Weeds,
With Berries, Burdocks, Violets, Dazies, Poppies,
And all the idle Flowers that grow
In our ſuſtaining Corn ; conduct me to him,
And Heav'n ſo proſper thee.

Kent. I will, good Lady.
Ha, *Gloſter* here !——Turn, poor dark Man, and hear
A Friend's Condolement, who at Sight of thine
Forgets his own Diſtreſs, thy old true *Kent.*

Gloſt. How, *Kent !* From whence return'd ?

Kent. I have not ſince my Baniſhment been abſent,
But in Diſguiſe follow'd th' abandon'd King :
'Twas me thou ſaw'ſt with him in the late Storm.

Gloſt.

Glost. Let me embrace thee; had I Eyes, I now
Should weep for joy; but let this trickling Blood
Suffice instead of Tears.

Cord. O Misery!
To whom shall I complain, or in what Language?
Forgive, O wretched Man, the Piety
That brought thee to this Pass, 'twas I that caus'd it;
I cast me at thy Feet, and beg of thee
To crush these weeping Eyes to equal Darkness,
If that will give thee any Recompence.

Edg. Was ever Season so distrest as this! [*Aside.*

Glost. I think *Cordelia*'s Voice! Rise pious Princess,
And take a dark Man's Blessing.

Cord. O, my *Edgar!*
My Virtue's now grow guilty, works the Bane
Of those that befriend me, Heav'n forsakes me,
And when you look that Way, it is but just
That you shou'd hate me too.

Edg. O wave this cutting Speech, and spare to wound
A Heart that's on the Rack.

Glost No longer cloud thee, *Kent*, in that Disguise,
There's Business for thee, and of noblest Weight;
Our injur'd Country is at length in Arms,
Urg'd by the King's inhuman Wrongs and mine,
And only want a Chief to lead 'em on.
That Task be thine.

Edg. Brave *Britons*, then there's Life in't yet, [*Aside.*

Kent. Then have we one Cast for our Fortune still.
Come, Princess, I'll bestow you with the King,
Then on the Spur to head these Forces.
Farewel, good *Glester*, to our Conduct trust.

Glost. And be your Cause as prosp'rous as 'tis just. [*Ex.*

Goneril's *Palace.* *Enter* Goneril, *Attendants.*

Gon. It was great Ignorance, *Glester*'s Eyes being out,
To let him live, where he arrives he moves
All Hearts against us: *Edmund* I think is gone,
In Pity to his Misery, to dispatch him.

Gent. No, Madam, he's return'd on speedy Summons
Back to your Sister.

Gon. Ha! I like not that,
Such Speed must have the Wings of Love? where's *Albany?*

Gent.

Gent. Madam, within, but never Man so chang'd;
I told him of the Uproar of the Peasants,
He smil'd at it; when I inform'd him
Of *Gloster*'s Treason——
Gon. Trouble him no farther,
It is his coward Spirit; back to our Sister,
Hasten her Musters, and let her know
I have given the Distaff into my Husband's Hands.
That done, with special Care deliver these Dispatches
In private to young *Gloster*.
Enter a Messinger.
Mess. O Madam, most unseasonable News,
The Duke of *Cornwall*'s dead of his late Wound,
Whose Loss your Sister has in Part supply'd,
Making brave *Edmund* General of her Forces.
Gon. One Way I like this well;
But being a Widow, and my *Gloster* with her,
May blast the promised Harvest of our Love.
A Word more, Sir——add Speed to your Journey,
And if you chance to meet with that blind Traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off. [*Ex.*
The Field SCENE, Gloster *and* Edgar.
Glost. When shall we come to th' Top of that same
Edg. We climb it now, mark how we labour. [Hill?
Glost. Methinks the Ground is even.
Edg. Horribly steep; heark, do you hear the Sea?
Glost. No truly.
Edg. Why then your other Senses grow imperfect
By your Eyes Anguish.
Glost. So may it be indeed.
Methinks thy Voice is alter'd, and thou speak'st
In better Phrase and Manner than thou didst.
Edg. You are much deceived; in nothing am I alter'd
But my Garments.
Glost. Methinks y'are better spoken.
Edg. Come on, Sir; here's the Place; how fearful
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's Eyes so low.
The Crows and Choughs, that wing the midway Air,
Shew scarce so big as Beetles; half way down
Hangs one who gathers Samphire, dreadful Trade!
The Fishermen that walk upon the Beach,

Appear like Mice; and yon tall anch'ring Bark
Seems leſſen'd to her Cock, her Cock a Buoy,
Almoſt too ſmall for Sight: The murmuring Surge
Cannot be heard ſo high; I'll look no more
Leſt my Brain turn, and the Diſorder make me
Tumble down head-long.

Gloſt. Set me where you ſtand.

Edg. You are now within a Foot of th' extreme Verge.
For all beneath the Moon I would not now
Leap forward.

Gloſt. Let go my Hand:
Here, Friend, is another Purſe, in it a Jewel
Well worth a poor Man's taking; get thee farther,
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Fare you well, Sir.——That I do trifle thus
With this his Deſpair, is with Deſign to cure it.

Gloſt. Thus, mighty Gods, this World I do renounce,
And in your Sight ſhake my Afflictions off;
If I could bear 'em longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great oppoſeleſs Wills,
My Snuff and feebler Part of Nature ſhou'd
Burn itſelf out. If *Edgar* liv'd! Oh bleſs him!
Now, Fellow, fare thee well.

Edg. Gone, Sir, farewell.
And yet I know not how Conceit may rob
The Treaſury of Life. Had he been where he thought,
By this had Thought been paſt ——Alive, or dead?
Hoa, Sir, Friend; hear you, Sir, ſpeak.——
Thus might he paſs indeed,——yet he revives.
What are you, Sir?

Gloſt. Away, and let me die.

Edg. Hadſt thou been aught but Goſmore Feathers,
Falling ſo many Fathom down, (Air!
Thou hadſt ſhiver'd like an Egg; but thou doſt breathe
Haſt heavy Subſtance! Bleed'ſt? not ſpeak! Art ſound?
Thy Life's a Miracle.

Gloſt. But have I fallen or no?

Edg. From the dread Summit of this chalky Bourn:
Look up, an Height, the ſhrill tun'd Lark ſo high
Cannot be ſeen or heard; do but look up.

Gloſt. Alack, I have no Eyes.

Is Wretchedneſs depriv'd that Benefit
To end itſelf by Death ?

Edg. Give me your Arm.
Up ; ſo, how is't ? Feel you your Legs ? You ſtand.

Gloſt. Too well, too well.

Edg. Upon the Brow o'th' Cliff, what Thing was that
Which parted from you ?

Gloſt. A poor unfortunate Beggar.

Edg. As I ſtood here below, methought his Eyes
Were two full Moons, wide Noſtrils breathing Fire.
It was ſome Fiend, therefore thou happy Father,
Think that th' all powerful Gods, who make them Ho-
Of Mens Impoſſibilities, have perſerved thee. (nours

Gloſt. 'Tis wonderful ; henceforth I'll bear Affliction
'Till it expire ; the Goblin which you ſpeak of,
I took for a Man ; oft-times 'twould ſay,
The Fiend, the Fiend : He led me to that Place. [here ?

Edg. Bear free and patient Thoughts. But who comes

Enter Lear, *a Coronet of Flowers on his Head ;*
Wreaths and Garlands about him.

Lear. No, no ; they cannot touch me for coining ;
I am the King himſelf.

Edg. O piercing Sight.

Lear. Nature's above Art in that Reſpect ; there's your Preſs-Money : That Fellow handles his Bow like a Cow-Keeper :——Draw me a Clothier's Yard. A Mouſe, a Mouſe, peace, hoa ! There's my Gauntlet ; I'll prove it on a Giant : Bring up the brown Bills : O well flown Bird ; i' th' White, i' th' White. ——————— Heugh ! Give the Word.

Edg. Sweet *Marjoram.*

Lear. Paſs.

Gloſt. I know that Voice.

Lear. Ha ! *Goneril* with a white Beard ! They flatter'd me like a Dog, and told me I had white Hairs on my Chin, before the black ones were there ; to ſay *ay* and *no* to every thing that I ſaid : *Ay* and *no* too was no good Divinity. When the Rain came once to wet me, and the Winds to make me chatter ; when the Thunder wou'd not peace at my bidding : There I found 'em, there I ſmelt them out. Go to, they are not Men of

their Words; they told me I was a King; 'tis a Lye, I am not Ague proof.

Glost. That Voice I well remember, is't not the King's?

Lear. Ay, every Inch a King; when I do ſtare, See how the Subject quakes.
I pardon that Man's Life; what was the Cauſe? Adultery? Thou ſhalt not die. Die for Adultery! The Wren goes to't, and the ſmall gilded Fly Engenders in my Sight. Let Copulation thrive; For *Gloſter*'s Baſtard Son was kinder to his Father, Than were my Daughters, got i'th' Lawful Bed. To't Luxury, *Pell-Mell*, for I lack Soldiers.

Glost. Not all my Sorrows paſt ſo deep have touch'd me, As theſe ſad Accents: Sight were now a Torment.——

Lear. Behold that ſimp'ring Lady, ſhe that ſtarts At Pleaſure's Name, and thinks her Ear profan'd With the leaſt wanton Word; wou'd you belive it, The Fitcher, nor the pamper'd Steed goes to't With ſuch a riotous Appetite: Down from the Waſte they are *Centaurs*, though Women all above; but to the Girdle do the Gods inherit, beneath is all the Fiends: there's Hell, there's Darkneſs, the ſulphurous unfathom'd.—— Fie! Fie! Pah!——An Ounce of *Civet*, good Apothecary, to ſweeten my Imagination.—— There's Money for thee.

Glost. Let me kiſs that Hand.

Lear. Let me wipe it it firſt; it ſmells of Mortality.

Glost. Speak, Sir, do you know me?

Lear. I remember thy Eyes well enough: Nay, do thy worſt, blind *Cupid*, I'll not love.——Read me this Challenge, mark but the penning of it.

Glost. Were all the Letters Suns, I cou'd not ſee.

Edg. I wou'd not take this from Report; wretched What will thy Virtue do, when thou ſhalt find (*Codelia!* This freſh Affliction added to the Tale
Of thy unparallel'd Griefs.

Lear. Read.

Glost. What! with this Caſe of Eyes!

Lear. O ho! Are you there with me? No Eyes in your Head, and no Money in your Purſe? Yet you ſee how this World goes.

Glost.

Glost. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What! Art mad! A Man may see how this World goes with no Eyes. Look with thy Ears; see how yon Justice rails on that simple Thief; shake 'em together, and the first that drops, be it Thief, or Justice, is a Villain.——Thou hast seen a Famer's Dog bark at a Beggar.

Glost. Ay, Sir.

Lear. And the Man ran from the Cur; there thou might'st behold the great Image of Authority, a Dog's obey'd in Office. Thou Rascal, Beadle, hold up thy bloody Hand, why dost thou lash that Strumpet? Thou hotly lust'st to enjoy her in that Kind for which thou whip'st her; do, do, the Judge that sentenc'd her has been before-hand with thee.

Glost. How stiff is my vile Sense, that yields not yet?

Lear. I tell thee the Usurer hangs the Couz'ner—— through tatter'd Robes small Vices do appear; Robes and Fur-Gowns hide all: Place Sins with Gold; why there 'tis for thee, my Friend, make much of it; it has the Power to seal the Accuser's Lips. Get thee glass Eyes, and (like a scurvy Politician) seem to see the Things thou dost not. Pull, pull off my Boots; hard, harder; so, so.

Glost. O Matter and Impertinency mixt!
Reason in Madness.

Lear. If thou wilt weep my Fortunes, take my Eyes,
I know thee well enough, thy Name is *Gloster*.
Thou must be patient, we come crying hither;
Thou know'st, the first Time that we taste the Air
We wail and cry ——I'll preach to thee, mark.

Edg. Break, lab'ring Heart.

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great Stage of Fools.——

Enter two or three Gentlemen.

Gent. O! here he is; lay Hand upon him, Sir;
Your dearest Daughter sends——

Lear. No Rescue? What! A Prisoner? I am even the natural Fool of Fortune: Use me well, you shall have Ransom.——Let me have Surgeons. Oh! I am cut to th' Brains.

Gent. You shall have any Thing.

Lear. No Seconds? All myself? I will die bravely like a smug Bridegroom, flush'd and pamper'd as a Priest's Whore, I am King, my Masters, know ye that?

Gent. You are a Royal One, and we obey you.

Lear. It were an excellent Stratagem to shoe a Troop of Horse with Felt, I'll put in Proof.——No Noise, no Noise.——Now will we steal upon these Sons-in-Law, and then——Kill, kill, kill, kill! [*Ex. Running.*

Glost. A Sight most moving in the meanest Wretch, Past speaking in a King. Now, good Sir, what are you?

Edg. A most poor Man made tame to Fortune's Strokes, And prone to Pity by experienc'd Sorrows; give me your (Hand.

Glost. You ever gentle Gods, take my Breath from me, And let not my ill Genius tempt me more To die before you please.

Enter Goneril's *Gentleman Usher.*

Gent. A proclaim'd Prize: O most happily met. That Eye-less Head of thine was first fram'd Flesh To raise my Fortunes; thou old unhappy Traitor, The Sword is out that must destroy thee.

Glost. Now let thy friendly Hand put Strength enough (to't.

Gent. Wherefore, bold Peasant, Dar'st thou support a publish'd Traitor? Hence, Lest I destroy thee too. Let go his Arm,

Edg. Chill not let go, Zir, without 'vurther 'Cashon.

Gent. Let go, Slave, or thou dies't.

Edg. Good Gentleman go your Gate, and let poor Volk pass; and chu'd ha' bin' zwagger'd out of my Life, it wou'd not a bin zo long as 'tis by a Vort-Night. ——Nay, an' thou com'st near th' old Man, I'st try Whether your Costard or my Ballow be th' harder.

Kent. Out Dunghill.

Edg. Chill pick your Teeth, Zir; come, no Matter Voines.

Gent. Slave, thou hast slain me; oh! untimely Death!

Edg. I know thee well, a serviceable Villain, As duteous to the Vices of thy Mistress, As Lust cou'd wish.

Glost. What! is he dead?

Edg.

Edg. Sit you, Sir, and rest you.
This is a Letter-Carrier, and may have
Some Papers of Intelligence, that may stand
Our Party in good stead to know.——What's here?
[*Takes a Letter out of his Pocket; opens, and reads.*
To *Edmund* Earl of *Gloster.*
Let our mutual Loves be remember'd, you have many Opportunities to cut him off. If he return the Conqueror, then I am still a Prisoner, and his Bed my Goal; from the loath'd Warmth of which deliver me, and supply the Place for your Labour.
Goneril.
A Plot upon her Husband's Life,
And the Exchange my Brother!——Here i' th' Sands
I'll rake thee up, thou Messenger of Lust,
Griev'd only that thou hadst no other Deaths-Man.
In Time and Place convenient I'll produce
These Letters to the Sight of th' injur'd Duke,
As best shall serve our Purpose; come, your Hand.
Far off methinks I hear the beaten Drum;
Come, Sir, I will bestow you with a Friend. [*Exeunt.*

A Chamber. Lear *asleep on a Couch*; Cordelia *and Attendants standing by him.*

Cord. His Sleep is found, and may have good Effect
To cure his jarring Senses, and repair.
This Breach of Nature.
Phys. We have employ'd the utmost Pow'r of Art,
And this deep Rest will perfect our Design.
Cord. O *Regan*, *Goneril!* Inhuman Sisters,
Had he not been your Father, these white Hairs
Had chancell'd sure some Pity! Was this a Face
To be expos'd against the jarring Winds?
My Enemy's Dog, though he had bit me, shou'd (to him.
Have stood that Night against my Fire.—He wakes, speak
Gent. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest [jestly?
Cord. How does my royal Lord? How fares your Ma-
Lear. You do me Wrong to take me out o'th' Grave.
Ha! is this too a World of Cruelty?
I know my Privilege: Think not that I will
Be us'd like a wretched Mortal? No,
No more of that. *Cord.*

Cord. Speak to me, Sir; whom am I?

Lear. You are a Soul in Bliſs; but I am bound
Upon a Wheel of Fire, which my own Tears
Do ſcald like molten Lead.

Cord. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a Spirit, I know; where did you die?

Cord. Still, ſtill, far wide. [compos'd.

Phyſ. Madam, he's ſcarce awake; he'll ſoon grow more

Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair Day-Light!
I am mightily abus'd, I ſhou'd even die with Pity
To ſee another thus. I will not ſwear
Theſe are my Hands.

Cord. O look upon me, Sir,
And hold your Hands in Bleſſing over me; nay,
You muſt not kneel.

Lear. Pray do not mock me.
I am a very fooliſh fond old Man,
Fourſcore and upward; and to deal plainly with you,
I fear I am not in my perfect Mind.

Cord. Nay, then farewell to Patience: Witneſs for me,
Ye mighty Pow'rs, I ne'er complain'd 'till now!

Lear. Methinks I ſhou'd know you, and know this Man,
Yet I am doubtful, for I am mainly ignorant
What Place this is; and all the Skill I have
Remember not theſe Garments; nor do I know
Where I did ſleep laſt Night.——Pray do not mock me,
For, as I am a Man, I think that Lady
To be my Child *Cordelia*.

Cord. O my dear, dear Father!

Lear. Be your Tears wet? Yes faith; pray do not weep,
I know I have giv'n thee Cauſe, and am ſo humbled
With Croſſes ſince, that I cou'd aſk
Forgiveneſs of thee, were it poſſible
That thou cou'dſt grant it; but I'm well aſſur'd
Thou can'ſt not; therefore I do ſtand thy Juſtice:
If thou haſt Poiſon for me I will drink it,
Bleſs thee, and die.

Cord. O pity, Sir, a bleeding Heart, and ceaſe
This killing Language.

Lear. Tell me, Friends, where am I?

Gent. In your own Kingdom, Sir.

Lear.

Lear. Do not abuſe me.

Gent. Be comforted, good Madam, for the Violence
Of his Diſtemper's paſt; we'll lead him in,
Nor trouble him, 'till he is better ſettled.
Will't pleaſe you, Sir, walk into freer Air?

Lear. You muſt bear with me, I am Old and Fooliſh.
[*They lead him off.*

Cord. The Gods reſtore you.——Hark, I hear afar
The beaten Drum. Old *Kent*'s a Man of's Word.
Oh! for an Arm
Like the fierce Thunderer's when the Earth-born Sons
Storm'd Heav'n, to fight this injur'd Father's Battle!
That I cou'd ſhift my Sex, and dye me deep
In his Oppoſer's Blood! But as I may,
With Womens Weapons, Piety and Pray'rs,
I'll aid his Cauſe.——You never erring Gods
Fight on his Side, and thunder on his Foes
Such Tempeſts as his poor ag'd Head ſuſtain'd.
Your Image ſuffers when a Monarch bleeds.
'Tis your own Cauſe, for that your Succours bring,
Revenge yourſelves, and right an injur'd King.

End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V.

SCENE, *A Camp.*

Enter Goneril *and Attendants.*

Gon. O UR Siſter's Pow'rs already are arriv'd,
And ſhe herſelf has promis'd to prevent
The Night with her Approach: Have you provided
The Banquet I beſpoke for her Recepti-[on
At my Tent?

Att.

Att. So, pleaſe your Grace, we have.

Gon. But thou, my Priſoner, muſt prepare the Bowl
That crowns this Banquet; when our Mirth is high,
The Trumpets ſounding, and the Flutes replying,
Then is the Time to give this fatal Draught
To this Imperious Siſter; if then our Arms ſucceed,
Edmund, more dear than Victory, is mine;
But if Defeat, or Death itſelf attend me,
'Twill charm my Ghoſt to think I've left behind me
No happy Rival. Heark, ſhe comes. [*Trumpet.* [*Exeunt.*

Enter Baſtard *in his Tent.*

Baſt. To both theſe Siſters have I ſworn my Love,
Each jealous of the other, as the Stung
Are of the Adder; neither can be held
If both remain alive; where ſhall I fix?
Cornwal is dead, and *Regan*'s empty Bed
Seems caſt by Fortune for me, but already
I have enjoy'd her, and bright *Goneril*
With equal Charms brings dear Variety,
And yet untaſted Beauty: I will uſe
Her Huſband's Countenance for the Battle, then
Uſurp at once his Bed and Throne. *Enter Officers.*
My truſty Scouts y'are well return'd; have ye deſcry'd
The Strength and Poſture of the Enemy?

Off. We have, and were ſurpris'd to find
The baniſh'd *Kent* return'd, and at their Head;
Your Brother *Edgar* on the Rear; old *Gloſter*
(A moving Spectacle) led through their Ranks,
Whoſe pow'rful Tongue, and more prevailing Wrongs,
Have ſo enraged their ruſtick Spirit, that with
Th' approaching Dawn we muſt expect their Battle.

Baſt. You bring a welcome Hearing; each to his Charge,
Line well your Ranks, and ſtand on your Award.
To Night repoſe you; i'th' Morn we'll give
The Sun a Sight that ſhall be worth his riſing. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Valley near the Camp.*

Enter Edgar *and* Gloſter.

Edg. Here, Sir, you take the Shadow of this Tree

For

For your good Hoſt; pray that the Right may thrive:
If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you Comfort. [*Exit.*
Gloſt. Thanks, friendly Sir;
The Fortune your good Cauſe deſerves betide you.
An Alarm; after which Gloſter *ſpeaks.*
The Fight grows hot; the whole War's now at work,
And the goar'd Battle bleeds in every Vein,
WhilſtDrums and Trumpets drown loud Slaughter's Roar.
Where's *Gloſter* now, that us'd to head the Fray,
And ſcour the Ranks where deadlieſt Danger lay?
Here, like a Shepherd, in a lonely Shade,
Idle, unarm'd, and liſtening to the Fight;
Yet the diſabled Courſer, maim'd and blind,
When to the Stall he hears the rattling War,
Foaming with Rage, tears up the batter'd Ground,
And tugs for Liberty.
No more of Shelter thou blind Worm, but forth
To th' open Field, the War may come this Way,
And cruſh thee into Reſt.——Here lie thee down,
And tear the Earth; that Work befits a Mole.
O dark Deſpair! When, *Edgar*, wilt thou come
To pardon, and diſmiſs me to the Grave? [*A Retreat*
Heark! A Retreat, the King has loſt, or won. [*ſounded.*
Re-enter Edgar *bloody.*
Edg. Away old Man, give me your Hand, away!
King *Lear* haſt loſt; he and his Daughter ta'en:
And this, ye Gods, is all that I can ſave
Of this moſt precious Wreck; give my your Hand.
Gloſt. No farther, Sir, a Man may rot, even here.
Edg. What! In ill Thoughts again? Men muſt endure
Their going hence, ev'n as their coming hither
Gloſt. And that's true too. [*Exeunt.*
Flouriſh. Enter in Conqueſt, Albany, Goneril, Regan, Baſtard.——Lear, Kent, Cordelia, *Priſoners.*
Alb. It is enough to have conquer'd, Cruelty
Shou'd ne'er ſurvive the Fight. Captain o'th' Guards,
Treat well your royal Priſoners, 'till you have
Our farther Orders, as you hold our Pleaſure.
Gon. Heark! Sir, not as you hold our Husband's Pleaſure, [*To the Captain aſide.*

But

But as you hold your Life, diſpatch your Pris'ners.
Our Empire can have no ſure Settlement
But in their Death; the Earth that covers them
Binds faſt our Throne. Let me hear they are dead.

Capt. I ſhall obey your Orders.

Baſt. Sir, I approve it ſafeſt to pronounce
Sentence of Death upon this wretched King,
Whoſe Age has Charms in it, his Title more,
To draw the Commons once more to his Side:
'Twere beſt prevent——

Alb. Sir, by your Favour,
I hold you but a Subject of this War,
Not as a Brother.

Regan. That's as we liſt to grace him.
Have you forgot that he did lead our Pow'rs;
Bore the Commiſſion of our Place and Perſon?
And that Authority may well ſtand up,
And call itſelf your Brother.

Gon. Not ſo hot,
In his own Merits he exalts himſelf
More than in your Addition.

Enter Edgar *diſguis'd.*

Alb. What art thou?

Edg. Pardon me, Sir, that I preſume to ſtop
A Prince and Conqueror, yet 'ere you triumph,
Give Ear to what a Stranger can deliver
Of what concerns you more than Triumph can.
I do impeach your General there of Treaſon,
Lord *Edmund*, that uſurps the Name of *Gloſter*,
Of fouleſt Practice 'gainſt your Life and Honour;
This Charge is true: and wretched though I ſeem,
I can produce a Champion that will prove
In ſingle Combat what I do avouch,
If *Edmund* dares but truſt his Cauſe and Sword.

Baſt. What will not *Edmund* dare! My Lord, I beg
The Favour that you'd inſtantly appoint
The Place where I may meet this Challenger,
Whom I will ſacrifice to my wrong'd Fame:
Remember, Sir, that injur'd Honour's nice,
And cannot brook Delay.

Alb. Anon, before our Tent, i' th' Army's View,
There let the Herald cry. *Edg.*

Edg. I thank your Highneſs in my Champion's Name:
He'll wait your Trumpet's Call.
Alb. Lead. [*Exeunt.*
Manent Lear, Kent, Cordelia, *guarded.*
Lear. O *Kent! Cordelia!*
You are the only Pair that I e'er wrong'd,
And the juſt Gods have made you Witneſſes
Of my Diſgrace; the very Shame of Fortune,
To ſee me chain'd and ſhackled at theſe Years!
Yet were you but Spectators of my Woes,
Not Fellow-Sufferers, all were well!
Cord. This Language, Sir, adds yet to our Affliction.
Lear. Thou, *Kent*, didſt head the Troops that fought
Expos'd thy Life and Fortunes for a Maſter (my Battle,
That had (as I remember) baniſh'd thee.
Kent. Pardon me, Sir, that once I broke your Orders;
Baniſh'd by you, I kept me here diſguis'd
To watch your Fortunes, and protect your Perſon;
You know you entertain'd a rough blunt Fellow,
One *Cajus*, and you thought he did you Service.
Lear. My truſty *Cajus*, I have loſt him too! [*Weeps.*
'Twas a rough Honeſty.
Kent. I was that *Cajus*,
Diſguis'd in that coarſe Dreſs, to follow you.
Lear. My *Cajus* too! Wer't thou my truſty *Cajus?*
Enough, enough.——
Cord. Ah me, he faints! his Blood forſakes his Cheek.
Help, *Kent.*——
Lear. No, no, they ſhall not ſee us weep,
We'll ſee them rot firſt.—Guards, lead away to Priſon;
Come *Kent*, *Cordelia*, come;
We two will ſit alone, like Birds i'th' Cage;
When thou doſt aſk me Bleſſing, I'll kneel down
And ask of thee Forgiveneſs; thus we'll live,
And pray, and ſing, and tell old Tales, and laugh
At gilded Butter-flies! hear Sycophants
Talk of Court News, and we'll talk with them too,
Who loſes and who wins, who's in, who's out,
And take upon us the Myſtery of Things,
As if we were Heav'n's Spies.
Cord. Upon ſuch Sacrifices

The Gods themſelves throw Incenſe.
Lear. Have I caught ye?
He that parts us muſt bring a Brand from Heav'n:
Together we'll out-toil the Spite of Hell,
And die the Wonders of the World; away.
[*Exeunt guarded.*

Flouriſh. Enter before the Tents, Albany, Goneril, Regan, *Guards and Attendants*; Goneril *ſpeaking apart to the Captain of the Guards entering.* (mand
Gon. Here's Gold for thee, thou know'ſt our late Com-
Upon your Priſ'ners Lives; about it ſtraight, and at
Our Ev'ning Banquet let it raiſe our Mirth,
To hear that they are dead.
Capt. I ſhall not fail your Orders. [*Ex.*
Albany, Goneril, Regan, *take their Seats.*
Alb. Now, *Gloſter*, truſt to thy ſingle Virtue; for thy
All levied in my Name, have in my Name (Soldiers,
Took their Diſcharge: Now let our Trumpets ſpeak,
And Herald read out this. [*Herald reads.*
If any Man of Quality, within the Liſts of the Army, will maintain upon Edmund, *ſuppos'd Earl of* Gloſter, *that he is a manifold Traitor, let him appear by the third Sound of the Trumpet; he is bold in his Defence*——*Agen, agen.* [*Trumpets anſwer from within.*
Enter Edgar *arm'd.*
Alb. Lord *Edgar!*
Baſt. Ha! My Brother!
This is the only Combatant that I cou'd fear,
For in my Breaſt Guilt duels on his Side:
But, Conſcience, what have I to do with thee?
Awe thou thy dull legitimate Slaves; but I
Was born a Libertine, and ſo I keep me.
Edg. My noble Prince, a Word;——'ere we engage,
Into your Highneſs's Hands I give this Paper;
It will the Truth of my Impeachment prove,
Whatever be my Fortune in the Fight.
Alb. We ſhall peruſe it.
Edg. Now, *Edmund*, draw thy Sword,
That if my Speech has wrong'd a noble Heart,
Thy Arm may do thee Juſtice: Here i'th' Preſence

Of

Of this high Prince, theſe Queens, and this crown'd Liſt,
I brand thee with the ſpotted Name of Traitor;
Falſe to thy Gods, thy Father, and thy Brother,
And what is more, thy Friend, falſe to this Prince:
If then thou ſhar'ſt a Spark of *Gloſter*'s Virtue,
Acquit thyſelf; or if thou ſhar'ſt his Courage,
Meet this Defrance bravely.

Baſt. And dares *Edgar*,
The beaten routed *Edgar*, brave his Conqueror?
From all thy Troops and Thee I forc'd the Field:
Thou haſt loſt the gen'ral Stake, and art thou now
Come with thy petty ſingle Stock to play
This after Game?

Edg. Half-blooded Man,
Thy Father's Sin firſt, then his Puniſhment;
The dark and vicious Place where he begot thee
Coſt him his Eyes; from thy licentious Mother
Thou draw'ſt thy Villainy; but for thy Part
Of *Gloſter*'s Blood, I hold thee worth my Sword.

Baſt. Thou bear'ſt thee on thy Mother's Piety,
Which I deſpiſe; thy Mother being chaſte,
Thou art aſſur'd thou art but *Gloſter*'s Son;
But mine, diſdaining Conſtancy, leaves me
To hope that I am ſprung from nobler Blood,
And poſſibly a King might be my Sire:
But be my Birth's uncertain Chance as 'twill,
Who 'twas that had the Hit to Father me
I know not; 'tis enough that I am I:
Of this one Thing I'm certain, ——that I have
A daring Soul, and ſo have at thy Heart.
Sound Trumpets. [*Fight*, Baſtard *falls*.

Gon. and Reg. Save him, ſave him.

Gon. This was Practice, *Glouſter*;
Thou won'ſt the Field, and was not bound to fight
A vanquiſh'd Enemy. Thou art not conquer'd,
But couz'ned and betray'd.

Alb. Shut your Mouth, Lady,
Or with this Paper I ſhall ſtop it.——Hold, Madam!
Thou worſe than any Name, read thy own Evil—
No tearing, Lady, I perceive you know it.

Gon. Say, if I do, who ſhall arraign me for't?

The Laws are mine, not thine.

Alb. Moſt monſt'rous! Ha! Thou know'ſt it too?

Baſt. Aſk me not what I know,
I have not Breath to anſwer idle Queſtions.

Alb. I am reſolv'd——Your Right, brave Sir, has conquer'd. [*To* Edgar.
Along with me, I muſt conſult your Father. [*Exit* Albany

Reg. Help every Hand to ſafe a noble Life; (*and* Edg.
My half o'th' Kingdom for a Man of Skill
To ſtop this precious Stream.

Baſt. Away ye Empericks,
Torment me not with your vain Offices;
The Sword has pierc'd too far: *Legitimacy*
At laſt has got it.

Reg. The Pride of Nature dies.

Gon. Away, the Minutes are too precious;
Diſturb us not with thy impertinent Sorrow.

Reg. Art thou my Rival then profeſt?

Gon. Why, was our Love a Secret? Cou'd there be
Beauty like mine, and Gallantry like his,
And not a mutual Love? Juſt Nature then
Had err'd. Behold that Copy of Perfection,
That Youth whoſe Story will have no foul Page,
But where it ſays he ſtoopt to *Regan*'s Arms:
Which yet was but Compliance, not Affection;
A Charity to begging, ruin'd Beauty!

Reg. Who begg'd when *Goneril* writ that? Expoſe it,
[*Throws her a Letter.*
And let it be your Army's Mirth, as 'twas
This charming Youth's and mine, when in the Bow'r
He breath'd the warmeſt Extaſies of Love;
Then panting on my Breaſt, cry'd, matchleſs *Regan!*
That *Goneril* and thou ſhou'd e'er be kin!

Gon. Die, *Circe*, for thy Charms are at an End;
Expire before my Face, and let me ſee
How well that boaſted Beauty will become
Congealing Blood, and Death's convulſive Pangs:
Die and be huſh'd; for at my Tent laſt Night
Thou drank'ſt thy Bane, amidſt thy rev'ling Bowls:
Ha! Doſt thou ſmile? Is then thy Death thy Sport?
Or has the truſty Potion made thee mad?

Reg.

Reg. Thou com'ſt as ſhort of me in thy Revenge,
As in my *Gloſter*'s Love; my Jealouſy
Inſpir'd me to prevent thy feeble Malice,
And poiſon thee at thy own Banquet.

Gon. Ha!

Baſt. No more, my Queens, of this untimely Strife;
You both deſerv'd my Love, and both poſſeſt it.
Come, Soldiers, bear me in; and let
Your Royal Preſence grace my laſt Minutes;
Now, *Edgar*, thy proud Conqueſt I forgive:
Who wou'd not chuſe, like me, to yield his Breath,
T' have Rival Queens contend for him in Death?

SCENE, *A Priſon.*

Lear *aſleep, with his Head on* Cordelia's *Lap.*

Cord. What Toils, thou wretched King, haſt thou en-
To make thee draw, in Chains, a Sleep ſo ſound? (dur'd
Thy better Angel charm thy raviſh'd Mind
With fancy'd Freedom; Peace is us'd to lodge
On Cottage Straw. Thou haſt the Beggar's Bed,
Therefore ſhould'ſt have the Beggar's careleſs Thought.
And now, my *Edgar*, I remember thee:
What Fate has ſeiz'd thee in this general Wreck
I know not, but I know thou muſt be wretched,
Becauſe *Cordelia* holds thee dear. (Image
O Gods! A ſudden Gloom o'er-whelms me, and the
Of Death o'er-ſpreads the Place.—Ha! Who are theſe?

Enter Captain *and* Officers *with Cords.*

Capt. Now, Sirs, diſpatch; already you are paid
In Part, the Beſt of your Reward's to come. (halts.

Lear. Charge, charge upon their Flank, their laſt Wing
Puſh, puſh the Battle, and the Day's our own.
Their Ranks are broke, down with *Albany*.
Who holds my Hands?——O thou deceiving Sleep,
I was this very Minute on the Chace;
And now a Priſoner here.——What mean the Slaves?
You will not murder me?

Cord. Help, Earth and Heaven!
For your Souls Sake, dear Sirs, and for the Gods.
Offi. No Tears, good Lady; no pleading againſt Gold
Come, Sirs, make ready your Cords. (and Preferment.
Cord. You, Sir, I'll ſeize,
You have a human Form, and if no Prayers
Can touch your Soul to ſpare a poor King's Life,
If there be any Thing that you hold dear,
By that I beg you to diſpatch me firſt.
Capt. Comply with her Requeſt; diſpatch her firſt.
Lear. Off Hell-Hounds, by the Gods I charge you ſpare
'Tis my *Cordelia*, my true pious Daughter; [her;
No Pity?——Nay, then take an old Man's Vengeance.
Snatches a Partiſan, and ſtrikes down two of them; the reſt quit Cordelia, *and turn upon him.*
Enter Edgar *and* Albany.
Edg. Death! Hell! Ye Vultures, hold your impious
Or take a ſpeedier Death than you wou'd give. [Hands,
Capt. By whoſe Command?
Edg. Behold the Duke, your Lord.
Alb. Guards, ſeize thoſe Inſtruments of Cruelty.
Cord. My *Edgar*, Oh!
Edg. My dear *Cordelia!* Lucky was the Minute
Of our Approach; the Gods have weigh'd our Suff'rings;
W'are paſt the Fire, and now muſt ſhine to Ages.
Gent. Look here, my Lord, ſee where the generous
Has ſlain two of 'em. (King
Lear. Did I not, Fellow?
I've ſeen the Day, with my good biting Faulchion
I cou'd have made 'em ſkip: I am Old now,
And theſe vile Croſſes ſpoil me; out of Breath,
Fie, oh! quite out of Breath, and ſpent.
Alb. Bring in old *Kent*; and, *Edgar*, guide you hither
Your Father, whom you ſaid was near; [*Exit* Edgar.
He may be an Ear-Witneſs at the leaſt
Of our Proceedings. [Kent *brought in here.*
Lear. Who are you?
My Eyes are none o'th' beſt, I'll tell you ſtreight;
Oh *Albany!* Well, Sir, we are your Captives,
And you are come to ſee Death paſs upon us.
Why this Delay?—Or is't your Highneſs's Pleaſure

To

To give us firſt the Torture? Say ye ſo?
Why here's old *Kent* and I, as tough a Pair
As e'er bore Tyrant's Stroke.——But my *Cordelia*,
My poor *Cordelia* here, O pity——
Alb. Take off their Chains.——Thou injur'd Majeſty,
The Wheel of Fortune now has made her Circle,
And Bleſſings yet ſtand 'twixt thy Grave and thee.
Lear. Com'ſt thou, inhuman Lord, to ſooth us back
To a Fool's Paradiſe of Hope, to make
Our Doom more wretched? Go to, we are too well
Acquainted with Misfortune, to be gull'd
With lying Hope; no, we will hope no more.
Alb. I have a Tale t'unfold, ſo full of Wonder
As cannot meet an eaſy Faith;
But by that Royal injur'd Head 'tis true.
Kent. What wou'd your Highneſs?
Alb. Know, the noble *Edgar*
Impeach'd Lord *Edmund*, ſince the Fight, of Treaſon,
And dar'd him for the Proof to fing'e Combat,
In which the Gods confirm'd his Charge by Conqueſt;
I left ev'n now the Traitor wounded mortally!
Lear. And whither tends this Story?
Alb. 'Ere they fought,
Lord *Edgar* gave into my Hand this Paper;
A blacker Scroll of Treaſon and of Luſt,
Than can be found in the Records of Hell;
There, ſacred Sir, behold the Character
Of *Goneril*, the worſt of Daughters, but
More vicious Wife.
Cord. Cou'd there be yet Addition to their Guilt!
What will not they that wrong a Father do?
Alb. Since then my Injuries, *Lear*, fall in with thine,
I have reſolv'd the ſame Redreſs for both.
Kent. What ſays my Lord?
Cord. Speak, for methought I heard
The charming Voice of a deſcending God.
Alb. The Troops, by *Edmund* rais'd, I have diſbanded;
Thoſe that remain are under my Command.
What Comfort may be brought to chear your Age,
And heal your ſavage Wrongs, ſhall be apply'd;
For to your Majeſty we do reſign

Your

Your Kingdom, ſave what Part yourſelf confer'd
On us in Marriage.
Kent. Hear you that, my Liege?
Cord. Then they are Gods, and Virtue is their Care.
Lear. Is't poſſible?
Let the Spheres ſtop their Courſe, the Sun make halt,
The Winds be huſh'd, the Seas and Fountains reſt;
All Nature pauſe, and liſten to the Change.
Where is my *Kent*, my *Cajus*?
Kent. Here, my Liege.
Lear. Why I have News that will recall thy Youth:
Ha! Did'ſt thou hear't, or did th' inſpiring Gods
Whiſper to me alone? Old *Lear* ſhall be
A King again.
Kent. The Prince, that like a God has Pow'r, has ſaid it.
Lear. Cordelia then ſhall be a Queen, mark that:
Cordelia ſhall be a Queen; Winds catch the Sound,
And bear it on your roſy Wings to Heav'n—
Cordelia is a Queen.
Re-enter Edgar *with* Gloſter.
Alb. Look, Sir, where pious *Edgar* comes,
Leading his Eyeleſs Father. O my Liege!
His wond'rous Story well deſerves your Leiſure;
What he has done and ſuffer'd for your Sake,
What for the fair *Cordelia*'s.
Gloſt. Where's my Liege? Conduct me to his Knees, to
His ſecond Birth of Empire: My dear *Edgar* (hail
Has, with himſelf, reveal'd the King's bleſt Reſtauration.
Lear. My poor dark *Gloſter*.
Gloſt. O let me kiſs that once more ſcepter'd Hand!
Lear. Hold, thou miſtake'ſt the Majeſty, kneel here;
Cordelia has our Pow'r, *Cordelia*'s Queen.
Speak, is not that the noble ſuff'ring *Edgar?*
Gloſt. My pious Son, more dear than my loſt Eyes.
Lear. I wrong'd him too, but here's the fair Amends,
Edg. Your Leave, my Liege, for an unwelcome Meſſage.
Edmund (but that's a Trifle) is expired.
What more will touch you, your imperious Daughters,
Goneril and haughty *Regan*, both are dead,
Each by the other poiſon'd at a Banquet:
This, dying, they confeſs'd,

Cord.

Cord. O fatal Period of ill-govern'd Life!
Lear. Ingrateful as they were, my Heart feels yet
A Pang of Nature for their wretched Fall.———
But, *Edgar*, I defer thy Joys too long:
Thou serv'dst distress'd *Cordelia*; take her crown'd,
Th' imperial Grace fresh blooming on her Brow;
Nay, *Gloster*, thou hast here a Father's Right,
Thy helping Hand t'heap Blessings on their Heads.
Kent. Old *Kent* throws in his hearty Wishes too.
Edg. The Gods and you too largely recompence
What I have done; the Gift strikes Merit dumb.
Cord. Nor do I blush to own myself o'er-paid
For all my Suff'rings past.
Glost. Now, gentle Gods, give *Gloster* his Discharge.
Lear. No, *Gloster*, thou hast Business yet for Life;
Thou, *Kent*, and I, retir'd to some close Cell,
Will gently pass our short Reserves of Time
In calm Reflections on our Fortunes past,
Cheer'd with Relation of the prosperous Reign
Of this celestial Pair; thus our Remains
Shall in an even Course of Thoughts be past,
Enjoy the present Hour, nor fear the last.
Edg. Our drooping Country now erects her Head,
Peace spreads her balmy Wings, and Plenty blooms.
Divine *Cordelia*, all the Gods can witness
How much thy Love to Empire I prefer!
Thy bright Example shall convince the World
(Whatever Storms of Fortune are decreed)
That Truth and Virtue shall at last succeed.

[*Ex. Omnes.*

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

Inconſtancy, the reigning Sin o'th' Age,
Will ſcarce endure true Lovers on the Stage;
You hardly ev'n in Plays with ſuch diſpence,
And Poets kill 'em in their own Defence.
Yet one bold Proof I was reſolv'd to give,
That I cou'd three Hours Conſtancy out-live.
You fear, perhaps, whilſt on the Stage w'are made
Such Saints, we ſhall indeed take up the Trade:
Sometimes we threaten,—but our Virtue may
For Truth (I fear) with your Pit-Valour weigh:
For (not to flatter either) I much doubt
When we are off the Stage, and you are out,
We are not quite ſo coy, nor you ſo ſtout.
We talk of Nunneries——but, to be ſincere,
Whoever lives to ſee us cloiſter'd there,
May hope to meet our Criticks at Tangier.
For Shame give over this inglorious Trade
Of worrying Poets, and go maul th' Alcade.

Well—

EPILOGUE.

Well!—since y'are all for bluſt'ring in the Pit,
The Play's Reviver humbly does admit
Your abs'lute Pow'r to damn his Part of it.
But ſtill ſo many Maſter-Touches ſhine
Of that vaſt Hand that firſt laid this Deſign,
That in great Shakeſpear's *Right, be's bold to ſay,*
If you like nothing you have ſeen To-day,
The Play your Judgment damns, not you the Play.

F I N I S.